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POEMS

BY

THE LATE JOHN BETHUNE;

WITH A

SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE,

BY HIS BROTHER.

LET NOT AMBITION MOCK THEIR USEFUL TOIL,
THEIR HOMELY JOYS, AND DESTINY OBSCURE;
NOR GRANDEUR HEAR, WITH A DISDAINFUL SMILE,
THE SHORT AND SIMPLE ANNALS OF THE POOR.

GRAY.

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PREFACE.

On the merits of the following Poems—when the near relationship in which I stood to their humble Author is considered—it would ill become me to offer an opinion. This much, however, I may say, without influential assistance the literary efforts of individuals in humble life rarely draw the attention of the busy world; and thus, though their merits were greater than they can possibly be, their chances of success are but small. In the absence of such recommendations, I would simply beg the reader of taste to compare them with the productions of others, and judge for himself. As their Author considered very few of them in a finished state, the measure, in some instances, may be found unequal. Where this defect could be remedied, without altering the sentiment, it has been done; but when such alterations would have affected the sense, as well as the sound, of the verses, they have not been attempted. Whatever opinion may be entertained as to the poetry, the unimpeachable morality of

the whole, and the natural piety of most of the pieces will, I trust, be at once acknowledged by all who take an interest in these things.

If an excuse for offering to the public a sketch of the Author's life should be deemed necessary, it might, perhaps, be found in the following lines, with which, it is to be believed, every reader must be well acquainted :—

" For thee, who, mindful of the unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these artless lines their tale relate,
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit should enquire thy fate,
Haply some hoary-headed swain might say," &c.

From such of his writings as have been already published, it is at least possible that "some kindred spirit" might be led to "enquire his fate;" and if the present writer were gone, there lives not a swain, "hoary-headed" or otherwise, who could tell aught concerning him, save that he lived poor, toiled hard, and died early, which is but scanty information. The reader will very probably think that I have been too minute, and detailed too much; and yet a great deal of what to me would have been interesting has been passed over in silence. For no inconsiderable share of what has been noticed, however, I can only expect to be pardoned; and when it is known that our feelings and pursuits were almost the very same—that we never knew what it was to have separate interests for a single moment—that we had buffetted, or rather been buffetted, by Fortune together from boyhood—that we had supped from the same

table, sat by the same fire, and slept in the same bed, with very few interruptions, from the period of infancy—and that we were nearly the last of the name and the race to which we belonged—the reader may, perhaps, be inclined to extend that pardon to one who has now so much of deep and melancholy interest, connected with the past, to ponder over. At all events, the wish to "make a book" formed no part of my motives for giving these details, as may be easily believed when it is farther known that from his own MSS. materials could have been furnished for three volumes instead of one, and that more than a third part of what was actually prepared for the press has been rejected almost indiscriminately to keep the book of a size proportioned to the price mentioned in the prospectus. Such as it is, I would hope that his unadorned story may perhaps be of some use in assisting to form habits of self-denial, industry, perseverance, and virtuous independence in the minds of others. With all its imperfections, it is at least free from that vitiating tendency which has been occasionally complained of, as attaching to the "Lives" of some individuals who, from considering themselves men of great genius, believed that they were at liberty to be still greater profligates. Such as he was, I have endeavoured to represent him without any attempt to colour more highly his humble virtues. Though I have tried to keep myself as much in the back ground as possible, on some occasions our concerns were so

intricately blended that it was impossible to do justice to his character separately. Much has been told which, but for his early death, would have remained for ever a secret; but without which, his little history would have been incomplete.

I cannot conclude without offering my warmest thanks to those who have so generously come forward to assist in procuring Subscribers, and thereby obviate the risk which otherwise would have attended the publication of the work. To Subscribers themselves, my thanks are also due; and I must say that I set a high value on the tribute which they have thus been pleased to pay to the memory of my departed brother.

A. Bethune.

Mount Pleasant, Newburgh,
August 1840.

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE OF JOHN BETHUNE.

John Bethune was born in the county of Fife, and parish of Moniemail, at a place called The Mount, now little known, though once famous as the residence of Sir David Lindsay. At the Martinmas following, his father, who had been a farm-servant, removed to a little hamlet called Easter Ferney. Here he stopped only ten days, when a situation again offering, he moved westward, to the Mains of Woodmill, a small farm in the parish of Abdie. This was in 1812: and thus the subject of the present notice, while yet an infant, was brought to the shores of that little lake which formed a sort of centre to his future sympathies, and close to which the greater part of his short life was passed. There being two contiguous farms called Woodmill, it may be necessary to state that it is the one nearest the Loch of Lindores which is here alluded to. The place may be easily identified by two old houses, which are still standing, a little to the northward of the ruins of what had been in ancient times the seat of the family to whom the estate belonged.

At Martinmas 1813, he was removed, along with his parents, to a place about a quarter of a mile farther north, called Lochend, and here nearly the whole of the remaining part of his life was spent. At the time alluded to, and for many years afterwards, the place consisted of four old-fashioned cottages, partly concealed from the road, which passes along the side of the Loch, by the nature of the ground; and of these, the one which was worst situate, and in worst repair, now became his home.

In his sixth year he was rather a spirited boy, and sometimes given to mischief—but still bashful in the presence of strangers. To give a part of his history in his own words:—on a scrap of paper, probably written when he was about sixteen, which he had entitled "Autobiography," he thus speaks: "I was born in a lonely cottage in Fifeshire; and though I have lived within a few miles of the place, such has been my love of the recluse, I have never seen my native spot since I left it, which happened at that early period of infancy when a child's mother is almost the only thing on earth for which he cares, and she being along with me, I did not even recollect the lonely cabin which I had left behind. I remember little of my history for some years afterwards, except a few of those boyish exploits, and witty observations, which parents are often pleased to recapitulate to their children, because they consider them the signs of opening genius, and the sure indications of future eminence

At last I arrived at that mature stage of human existence—six years of age—which, I believe, is in general a momentous era in the history of boys; for about this period, or even sooner, most of them are sent to school. At all events, this was the time fixed for my imprisonment, though I anticipated nothing but pleasure in my prison-house, and longed exceedingly for the day when I was to go there. I painted to myself many fine toys, which I was to receive in barter from the other schoolboys—many fine games which I was to learn and play at—and, above all, many fine friends whom I was to gather around me in that circle of warm hearts. With all these fine things full in view, I committed to memory a few questions from the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and part of a Psalm; and with one acquaintance by my side, on a cold winter morning, hied me off to what I had fondly anticipated was a place of sport and unmixed enjoyment. After a walk of about two miles, during which my companion instructed me in the rules of the school, we arrived at a miserable-looking village, in the midst of which a number of disorderly boys were romping and roaring on a green which extended a little way in front of the school-house."

Here the manuscript terminates abruptly, and the subject appears never to have been resumed. The "miserable-looking village" alluded to is Dunbog. As was evident from the little which he said about it at his return, the place had produced

nothing but disappointment. On the following morning he complained of pain in his head: and as it was believed that the death of an elder brother had been partly brought on by some harsh treatment which he received when going to school, his parents never afterwards urged him to go; and so satisfied was he as to his mistake concerning school life, that he scarcely ever mentioned it again. Thus, in so far as he could be benefited by the time which he spent there, it may be safely asserted that he never was at school.

From this time onward, his mother endeavoured, as she had done before, to teach him reading; and the only education which he received besides, was such desultory lessons in writing and arithmetic as the present writer, who was then but very indifferently qualified for the task, could give him. At first he was rather a dull scholar: for a long time his penmanship was uncommonly awkward, and in arithmetic he never could be persuaded to proceed beyond multiplication, from the idea, as he said, that "he had as much *counting* as would enable him to count all the money he was ever likely to have." This was, indeed, true; but he was afterwards convinced of the incorrectness of the opinion by which he was then governed.

An instance of his firmness, and the manner in which he could keep his word, even at this early period, may be here mentioned. One afternoon he had gone with a boy, somewhat older than himself, who was then herding cows. At night he

returned with his clothes sadly torn, his face terribly cut and disfigured, and his vest, and the breast of his shirt, completely soaked with blood. As was natural, his friends were alarmed, and inquired eagerly as to the cause of his misfortune. But all he would say was, that while running at full speed, he had fallen among the stones of a ruinous dike, which he mentioned. With this account of it they were forced to be satisfied at the time; and it was not till several years afterwards that he told how the thing really happened. He had, it seemed, been persuaded by the other boy to go and turn back one of the cows who had strayed beyond the extent of their pasture. Though the animal was known to be dangerous, he obeyed; but the moment he came before her, she attacked him. He defended himself with a switch, till it was broken in pieces, and then endeavoured to fly; but stumbling over a large stone, he fell in turning, and before he could rise again, the enraged animal took him up on her horns, and then, with a shake of her head, threw him down among the stones. She was on the point of repeating the same operation, while he, stunned and stupified by the fall, could offer no resistance, and it is probable his life might have terminated here, had not another cow come running forward, at a most critical moment, and attacking his assailant, drove her off. By the time he could rise, the blood was streaming from his nose, as well as from the wounds he had received, and he was on the point of going home, when the other

boy represented the displeasure which might await him were he to return in such a plight. As soon as this appeal was made, he consented to remain till night, and to say nothing even then of the manner in which he had received the injury. With some difficulty the bleeding was stanched, by repeated applications of cold water; and though the pain which he suffered must have been very considerable, he denied himself the sympathy of his friends, and kept the cause of it, which a majority of boys would have told in a few hours at most, a secret for years.

When about eight years of age, he was sent to herd two cows, which, as forester on the Woodmill estate, his father was then allowed to keep. This occupation he never liked; and in after-life he sometimes made his friends laugh by telling them the devices to which he had recourse to make the cows run home, that he might get quit of his task. Being perfectly domesticated, he had no difficulty in approaching them; and on these occasions he first endeavoured to tickle their skin with the end of a straw, in imitation of the uneasiness produced by the large flies which annoy the cattle in summer, and when by this means he had got them to run off, he kept them running, by carrying a handful of stones, and throwing one at them as often as he thought he could do so unobserved. This was almost the only deceit he was ever known to practise, and he afterwards regarded it as a piece of meanness unworthy even of a boy.

His feelings, or rather his fancies, at this time, may be partly gathered from the following verses, which were probably written in 1829, when he was little more than seventeen years of age. With all their imperfections, they are certainly among the earliest of his literary efforts to which he had endeavoured to give a finishing touch; and for this reason, though rather long, they are given entire.

EVENING SONGS.

Hail, hallow'd Evening! sacred hour to me,
Thy clouds of gray, thy vocal melody,
Thy dreamy silence, oft to me have brought
A sweet exchange from toil to peaceful thought.
Ye purple heavens! how often has my eye,
Wearied with its long gaze on drudgery,
Look'd up and found refreshment in the hues
That gild thy vest with colouring profuse!

O Evening gray! how oft have I admired
Thy airy tapestry, whose radiance fired
The glowing minstrels of the olden time,
Until their very souls flow'd forth in rhyme.
And I have listen'd, till my spirit grew
Familiar with their deathless strains, and drew
From the same source some portion of the glow
Which fill'd their spirits, when from earth below
They scann'd thy golden imagery. And I
Have consecrated *thee*, bright Evening sky,
My fount of inspiration; and I fling
My spirit on thy clouds—an offering
To the great Deity of dying day,
Who hath transfused o'er *thee* his purple ray.

O Evening gray! my deepest, purest joy,
While yet an untaught, wild, and wayward boy,

Loitering and dreaming by the waveless lake,
Was to gaze on thy mirror'd face, and make
Curious conjectures and strange phantasies
Of thy high world of clouds, whose thousand dyes
Drew forth my boyish soul, till it would mix
With the deep glory, and I tried to fix
Ideal boundaries to those vapoury domes
Which seem'd of spirits the celestial homes.
Thy clouds of purple, edged with colours dun
By Heaven's high painter—the receding sun—
To my young eye appear'd the blest abode
Of souls who fled through flood and flame to God
Ay, there methought the glorious martyr band
Sat smiling on their once-loved native land;
And, crown'd with never-fading bays and palms,
While heaven was made harmonious by their psalms,—
Rejoicing with immortal joy to see
That *land*, for which they died, now hap'ly free—
That *hope*, which made them in the dungeon smile,
Bright'ning each vale through Albion's favour'd isle—
That *faith*, for which their limbs had erst been bound,
Preach'd full and free to multitudes around—
That Holy Book, whose every word is life,
In palace, hall, and humble cottage rife—
The words they spoke, the dying songs they sung,
Treasured in every heart—on every tongue.

Such were the dreams with which, for many a day,
I mused the peaceful evening hour away;
And still, with fancy's ever-dreaming eye,
I saw these martyr'd brethren in the sky:
The placid heavens above them, softly blue,
The green earth far beneath them, full in view,
And clouds around, beyond expression fair!
Still I could almost wish to see them there.
And then I wish'd my thoughts, my soul, to twine
With those pure spirits in that holy shrine.

And then I listen'd for the songs they sung,
Till in my ear faint melodies were rung:
Cheated by fancy, I enjoy'd the cheat—
Deceived, yet I believed not the deceit!
And still they sung in harmony methought,
While the faint zephyrs caught each wandering note,
And from the glowing west bore them along,
Till earth was bless'd with the harmonious song,
Which seem'd to fall in many a hallow'd close
On the green wood which shelter'd my repose.

The principal pasture of his father's cows consisted of a narrow strip of uncultivated ground between the public road and the margin of "the waveless lake." The foregoing verses evidently refer to his herding days, when the greater part of his time was passed in the immediate vicinity of that expanse of water; and thus it would appear that the seeds of poetry had been early implanted in his disposition. The allusion to the "martyr band" was probably suggested by two old books, entitled "The Cloud of Witnesses," and "The Scots Worthies," which were in the house at the time referred to, and which, though then a bad reader himself, he frequently requested to have read to him.

Like most of his countrymen, he had heard the strains of Burns at a very early period of life; and as he listened to some of that poet's finer productions, such as "The Cottar's Saturday Night," "The Vision," "Address to a Mountain Daisy," &c. his eye would sparkle and his cheek glow with

excited feeling. About this time, a book, which was then very common among the peasantry, containing a sort of metrical history of Sir William Wallace and Robert Bruce, came in the way. He listened with enthusiasm to what he then considered an authentic record of the deeds of his countrymen; and so deeply did he feel interested in their exploits, and so eager was he to be able to peruse them for himself, that he set about learning to read in good earnest, and actually surmounted, in a few days, what had hitherto been an almost insurmountable difficulty. The first of these stories, which, so far as I recollect, is the production of Hamilton of Bangor, he afterwards regarded as coarsely told, and unpoetical; but at the time they both served an important purpose to him, and exemplified the truth of some unfinished verses, entitled "The Poor Poet," which he afterwards wrote, and in which it would almost appear he had unintentionally described a part of his own character. The following is a short extract:—

I kenn'd the bard in infancy,
He was nae common bairn,
For genius beam'd in his young e'e,
And wild wit wanton'd in his glee,
And he was *quick to learn;*
Yet most reluctantly he conn'd
The lessons Wisdom taught,
Though few were half sae gleg as he,
Or half sae quick in thought.

* * * * * *

He could not bend his boyish head
Before the great in slavish dread;

But to the humble and the poor
He was a condescending boy;
And well his spirit could endure
The tricks and jests of rustic joy, &c.

During the winter of 1823-4, to assist in supporting himself, he broke stones on the road between Lindores and Newburgh, along with his biographer. He was then under thirteen years of age; and when, from the intense cold which occasionally prevailed, and the lack of motion to which his employment subjected him, his legs and feet were almost frozen, instead of complaining, and making this an excuse for running home, as a number of boys would have done, I was frequently amused in no ordinary degree by the droll observations which he made, and the wild gambols to which he sometimes had recourse to restore the natural warmth to his benumbed extremities. From his father having been subject to disease of the bowels for a number of years previous, and the numerous expedients, all attended with expense, which had been resorted to for the purpose of restoring him, the family were at this time considerably in debt. Young as he was, he had already caught that spirit of independence which characterized him through life; and his enthusiasm now pointed forward to the time when we should be able to redeem these debts. To accomplish this object, there was no personal suffering, and no sacrifice of boyish pleasure, which he would not willingly have encountered; and thus

he persevered at an occupation from which, in winter, even full-grown men might be excused for shrinking.

Breaking stones, however, was found to be the reverse of a comfortable way of earning his subsistence. The weaving business—particularly that branch of it which embraces the cotton trade—was then in a prosperous condition. A boy, with whom he was intimately acquainted, had gone to learn that occupation in the previous autumn, and to it my brother's attention was now directed. An industrious weaver was then said to earn 2s. a-day; the most which ordinary men could make by breaking stones was 1s. 3d.; and after making an allowance for two years of an apprenticeship, during which he might have the half of his earnings, and victual himself, if he chose, he, as well as his friends, believed that it would be for his advantage to learn that craft. The necessary arrangements were accordingly made, and on the 4th of March, 1824, he went as an apprentice to a weaver then residing in the village of Collessie, which was distant nearly three miles from his home.

Hitherto we had scarcely ever been separated for more than a day at a time, and this separation might be regarded as our first trial. How he felt under it cannot be told, for he never complained; but during his last illness he informed me, that from the day on which he left home his anticipations constantly pointed forward to the happiness he should enjoy at his return. In the sports of

the apprentices, and other boys of the place, he seldom joined, though he was frequently an onlooker. This shyness of disposition led them to suppose that he was one who might with safety be made the butt of their jests. These he bore patiently, till some of the boys began to take still greater liberties, and then, by assuming a threatening attitude, he put an end to the annoyance he had received from this quarter. In a short time he had acquired as much dexterity at his new profession as enabled him to earn about 1s. 10d. a-day; and to this quantity of work he regularly tasked himself, as long as his apprenticeship lasted, rising early on the Saturday mornings, that he might complete it in time to return home at night. In the month of March, 1825, he had a smart illness; and, after being confined to bed for a part of two days, was brought home in a cart. He soon recovered, and was able to resume his work again in less than a week; but it was the recollection of this illness which, after a lapse of five or six years, suggested "The Couch by Friendship Spread," which will be found among the following Poems. Of his apprentice-master and his wife, to the latest period of his existence, he spoke in the warmest terms of gratitude, and seemed to regard their kindness as almost equal to that of his parents; but still, while he lay among strangers, there was

> A something round his aching head
> Unlike his own endearing bed.

To turn his skill in the art of weaving to account as soon as possible, it was now stipulated, that instead of his master getting only one-half of his earnings, according to the original agreement, he should have the whole, after Whitsunday 1825, while the apprentice still continued to victual himself, by which means his apprenticeship would expire in November following. To the adoption of this measure there was at the time many inducements. By exerting himself he said he was certain he could earn 2s. 6d. a-day; my earnings then amounted to very little more than half that sum, and for this reason he wished to teach me his own trade, in which he believed my labours would be better rewarded than in that I had formerly followed. From the estate having changed masters, his father, too, had lost his situation as forester; and being now, from the infirmities of approaching age, unable to endure the privations and hardships incident to the life of a common labourer, to provide for his comfort in the evening of his days, was another motive for making the most of everything. With these objects in view, a house adjoining the one in which his father lived, which chanced to be then empty, was taken as a work-shop; by the most desperate economy, about £10 had been previously saved to purchase looms, and other articles appropriate to weaving; and at Martinmas 1825 he commenced that business on his own account, with the writer of this sketch as an apprentice. The £10 was fairly

expended in procuring a proper supply of utensils. The future, however, was still bright, and his hopes of independence were high—but a sad disappointment was before him.

The almost universal failures which occurred in the end of 1825, and beginning of 1826, with the general distress, for want of employment, which followed, must still be fresh in the memories of many. The effect of these failures was severely felt by him and his apprentice almost at the very commencement of their career. While thousands, who had formerly been engaged in the same business, were in a state of idleness and starvation, they were glad to find employment as labourers, at 1s. 2d. a-day. Nor was this all: though he performed as much work as some of those who wrought along with him, his appearance was still boyish, and his employers thought proper to pay him with 1s. Before the trade had recovered, the house which he had occupied as a workshop was required for the accommodation of a family; for a number of years afterwards it did not appear that it would have been advisable to make any great sacrifice to obtain another, and thus the whole of the weaving utensils, which but a short time before had cost what would have been a little fortune to him, were no better than so much useless lumber. His hopes from this quarter were now completely at an end—and this may be regarded as the first of that series of disappointments

of which his future history in a great measure consists.

As that disease, from which he afterwards suffered so much, owed its commencement to this period, it may not be improper to notice the circumstances which produced it. In the summer of 1826, while still endeavouring to find employment as a weaver, during those long intervals of idleness which were forced upon him, he occasionally passed a part of his time by bathing in the loch. The extraordinary heat of the season was a strong temptation to indulge in this species of relaxation. He soon became an expert swimmer; and, following the example of others with whom he had become acquainted, it was quite common for him to remain in the water two or three hours at a time. This practice, though he was not sensible of it at the moment, produced bad consequences at last, and from the period referred to he dated the first derangement of his stomach. In the autumn of the following year, while engaged in the potato-harvest, a striving occurred; some of his fellows, provided they got forward, cared little in what manner the work was done; he, however, was too honest to pass it negligently over, and too proud to remain behind; over-exertion, of which he did not feel the bad effects till next day, was the consequence, and from this time forward the disease, which afterwards became confirmed dyspepsia, never failed to manifest itself in a greater or less degree. Previous to

these events, he was in every respect as stout as others at his years usually are, and bade as fair for long life and health as any one. But two improprieties, which in themselves might have been deemed perfectly innocent, laid the foundation of a malady which was not only the cause of much misery and suffering to him through life, but, in his own words, certainly tended to "shorten its fleeting lease;"—and let this be a warning to every youth into whose hands these pages may fall, to beware how he presumes upon his own strength before he has attained the firmness of manhood.

As there is almost always some predisposing cause in those instances where the mind takes a decided turn, it may not be altogether out of place to notice here some circumstances which tended to draw his attention to literature. In the summer of 1825, a student from the College of St Andrews, who was then struggling hard for his education, tried to teach a small school in one of the houses at Lochend. He was an excellent reciter of poetry, and had stored his memory with a number of the best pieces of Scott, Byron, Moore, Campbell, and others. With these he frequently amused and delighted his acquaintances during his leisure hours, a considerable part of which were passed with us. The Author of the following Poems was then absent serving his apprenticeship, but he had an opportunity of hearing him on the Saturday evenings, and also during the harvest season, when he was at home.

From hearing these pieces recited, he soon learned to recite them himself, and then it was but another step on the same road to try to imitate them. Accordingly, among his papers there is one dated 1826, which begins with some allusions to a flagstaff erected the year before upon the highest point of the hill rising immediately from the eastern shore of the loch. Upon this spot a sort of barrow had been raised in ancient times, to mark the place where some warlike chief had been buried. In removing the earth for the purpose of fixing the flagstaff, a large stone was displaced, and in a cavity under it the point of a weapon was found, along with some decayed bones, and a small quantity of earth, blacker than the surrounding soil, which was supposed to be the dust of a human body. These observations will enable the reader to understand some allusions, which otherwise might have been unintelligible, in the following verses:—

Upon yon hill, which far o'erlooks the tide,
A flagstaff rears its tall and slender form:
Full many a cutting gale it there must bide,
And the rude dash of many a winter storm.

But soon advancing time must lay it low—
That power which level lays the towering cone—
And pressing onward, dread, and firm, and slow,
Strikes down the mighty monarch on his throne.

Yes, it must lie as low upon the heath
As lies the dust of him it stands above:

Let Reason cry, " Here is the laurel wreath
Which heroes fight to find, and die to prove!"

Yon barrow had been raised to hide his dust;
But what, alas! can monuments perform—
Since the proud trophy and the marble bust
Can't hide the body from the gnawing worm?

From these I turn to where in ripples glide
The little waves upon the summer lake,
Which oft attracts my feet at eventide,
And oft my eye at morn when I awake.

And oft it seems to smile upon my home—
Where poverty and pale misfortune dwell—
Making, with their sad looks, that humble dome
Almost as cheerless as a hermit's cell.

* * * * *

That Being who commands the thunder's roll,
Commands these ills; on me He bids them fling
Their shadows—and upon my sadden'd soul
Implant, at every turn, their wayward sting, &c.

It must at once be acknowledged that there is not much in these verses; but it should also be recollected that they were the production of an illiterate boy, under fifteen years of age, whose spirit, at the time he wrote them, was clouded by disappointment and poverty. The penmanship is particularly uncouth, and no respect has been paid to orthography, most of the words being spelled according to their pronunciation. Another paper, entitled " Evening Meditations," and several other scraps, seem to owe their origin to the same period. These, it must be admitted, are very far from being

finished poetry; but still, with all their imperfections, occasional indications of MIND, and sallies of imagination, may be met with in the whole.

In the month of November 1827, he was employed, along with two others, in clearing out a water-course, which gave drainage to a considerable extent of country. The water, from recent rains, was then so deep as to reach almost to the knee, and, owing to the advanced season of the year, extremely cold. One of his fellow-labourers was taken ill, and confined for several days: he also caught cold, but the case was not so severe as to keep him at home; and thus he continued to struggle on at a most killing employment, till it terminated in a cough. Near the end of the same month he was engaged a day taking marl from a pit in a marshy situation, when, having got himself wet, he again experienced an increase of the disease. Near the end of December he was sent to drain off some standing water from a swamp. The day was one of intense frost: he again got himself wet, and again caught cold. During the whole of this period, the cough occasioned by his first illness had continued; but as it was not violent, it did not excite any alarm. On the night of Old Handsel Monday, however, it had increased so much as to deprive him entirely of sleep. Next day a doctor was called, who attended him afterwards with the greatest care; but for nearly a fortnight nothing seemed to produce the slightest alleviation. The cough, which was uncommonly

hard and dry, was so distressing, that he could not lie down in a bed, and for a number of nights he sat by the fire. When utterly wearied out with sitting, he one night lay down upon the hearth-stone, and succeeded in getting a little sleep. This seems to have been mainly attributable to the temperature of the air in which he lay down being the same as that he had been previously breathing, which could not have been the case had he removed to a bed at a distance from the fire. Afterwards a couch was made for him close to the chimney every night, and a good fire kept constantly burning. To induce sleep, his medical attendant allowed him to take small quantities of laudanum, and through these means, by the blessing of God, the cough began slowly to abate. While the weather was yet cold, and he was so weak as to be unable to venture out, he used to take an axe, and hammer at a piece of wood with the head of it, for exercise; and as the spring advanced, about the middle of the day, if it chanced to be calm, or if the wind blew from a quarter to which the place was not exposed, he got out to the garden, and dug holes in it with a spade. Providence was again pleased to bless these little expedients, by making them the means of gradually restoring his strength. About the middle of March 1828, he was so far recovered as to be able to resume his work. He was, however, considerably paler than before; and ever after, when he caught cold, he was subject to a hard dry

cough, which lasted for weeks, and sometimes even months. I have given a circumstantial account of this illness, not merely because the incidents are engraven on my own remembrance beyond the power of time to efface them, but because I hope it may be of use in teaching others to avoid tampering with their constitutions in such cases, and also that it may be of some service to those whose relations are threatened with that terrible scourge of humanity—consumption—from which, in the present instance, he so narrowly escaped.

Some time in October 1829, the overseer on the estate of Inchrye engaged him to work, as a day-labourer, in the plantations, garden, and at whatever else might be required. Notwithstanding the long absence from work occasioned by his previous illness, and the additional expense which was then incurred, by this time he had begun to look forward with the cheering prospect of rising above poverty, and keeping himself independent by his daily labour: but a new misfortune which, though it fell not on him, affected him deeply, as falling on a friend, was now impending. On the 11th of November 1829, while the writer of this sketch was employed in blasting rock, a quantity of gunpowder exploded, and throwing him into the air, left him nearly lifeless. To see an only brother with his head and face scorched, blackened, swollen, and otherwise mangled to such an extent as to preclude for a time all hopes of recovery, might

have affected older men; and young as the subject of the present notice then was, and warmly attached to his few relations, to him this must have been a severe trial. While there are others to whom I would even here pause to acknowledge my obligations, to him I owe a still deeper debt of gratitude. To his untiring benevolence, and warm affection, upon this occasion, I can bear ample testimony. Patiently did he watch by my bedside till it was supposed I was out of danger; and then to provide for the exigencies of the family, which now depended upon him alone for support, he wrought at his former occupation by day, and took his turn to watch by night, till I could be left with safety. The result of this accident was a heavy expenditure, occasioned by distress, and four months of inability to labour; at the end of which period, from his exertions in behalf of his unfortunate brother, he again found himself in debt.

The time which elapsed between his sixteenth and eighteenth year had produced a remarkable change in his personal appearance. Up to the former of these periods, his growth had been like that of other boys of his age; but by the time he reached the latter, he measured somewhat more than six feet. The disease in his stomach had completely stolen the red from his complexion; and, except when the blood was called to his cheek to resist the effects of extreme cold, his face was uniformly pale, with a thoughtful expression, which accorded ill with his years. His mind had

now taken a decidedly literary turn; and between this and 1831 he had produced a great number of poetical effusions, which are still lying, as he left them, in an old copy-book. Many of these, from the circumstance of being written in a very minute character, upon such scraps of paper as had come to the house with grocery wares, &c., and from having been long exposed to smoke, dust, and occasional drenchings with rain water, which oozed through the roof, can now scarcely be read without the assistance of a magnifying glass. Among others which owe their origin to this period, the following, which are written upon better paper, may be mentioned:—"Religion," a poem of twenty-five pages, with upwards of forty lines in every page. "The Mountain Minstrel," thirty-six pages, forty-five lines to each. The idea of this poem seems to have struck him early: there are several plans, and a great number of fragments belonging to it, scattered up and down among his papers. "Winter," "The Deluge," "The Place of Souls," "The Evening Star," "The Babe," "The Danube," and "The Maiden of Norway," are all of a shorter description. Then follow "Friendship"—seven Spencerian stanzas; "Morning," in a different measure, and rather longer; "Caledonia," twenty-four Spencerian stanzas; "The Moonbeam," "The Soldier's Parting Song," "Mystic Ties," and "A Walk for Friendship." Some of these are imitations of the style, though not of the sentiments, of Mrs Hemans. "The Wounded Sailor,"

"Charity," "The Patriot's Vision," the last of which is Spencerian, and "The Sigh," come next. "The Ill-fated Feast," under which title he describes that revel of the Eastern King at which the HAND came forth and wrote upon the wall, is the last of the collection, and occupies ten pages of closely written manuscript. Among the rest of the papers which he produced about this time, there is one entitled, "The Plan of the Pilgrim." I still recollect the appearance of the fields, the sky, and the scenery around, almost as freshly as if it had been but yesterday, when, in 1830, during a short walk, just as the sun was setting on a still summer evening, he first spoke to me of the subject. On the previous night he had been reading an account of Indian scenery and Indian manners, from some book, of which I have now forgotten the name. It had struck him as poetical; and on the following day, while employed alone in the plantations of Inchrye, he had arranged the incidents, and settled on the outline of a poem of some length. By the account which he then gave, as well as from the written "plan" which he has left, it was to have been an Indian Tale, in which Bonarjee, an aged Brahmin, living upon the banks of the Ganges where it breaks from the mountains, who wished to die at the shrine of Juggernaut, was to have been the principal character. But about this time, during those short intervals which he could spare from his master's work, he was harassed with a number of

other occupations; and all he has left of the projected poem is a fragment, entitled "The Hall of Bonarjee."

It would be difficult to say if some of the pieces mentioned above are at all inferior to his later productions. The penmanship, however, is very indifferent, and the spelling, in almost the whole of them, is occasionally imperfect—a defect which he now wished to remedy.

By the time he was eighteen, he had determined to surmount the difficulties of orthography; and for this purpose he carried a little work, called "The Christian Remembrancer," of which he was then remarkably fond, always in his pocket. From the short poems, of which nearly one-half of the book is composed, he selected one, and when going to and returning from his work, as well as in his journeys at dinner-time, he was in the habit of conning it over till he had fixed the spelling of every word in his memory; after which he took another, and thus proceeded to the end of the work. He also bought a copy of "Mayer's Johnson's Dictionary," and this, whenever he had occasion to write, he laid down beside him, determining not to pass a single word, as to the proper spelling of which he was in the slightest hesitation. When at any time he had a few minutes to spare, which could not be turned to a more profitable account, he used also to pore over its pages for the proper pronunciation and accentuation of words, marking as he went along, and trying to

fix in his memory, such as appeared to be in any way poetical or striking. By persevering in these means, he at last acquired the ability of spelling accurately any common word which he had occasion to use; and by imitating whatever he considered worthy of imitation in those specimens of the writing of others which fell in his way, a marked improvement in his penmanship soon began to be observable.

In the midst of this enthusiasm for a favourite pursuit, it may, perhaps, be supposed that he would, in some measure, neglect his work, and altogether renounce those duties which, as a member of society, he owed to others. The very reverse of this, however, was the case. From his work he was never absent a day, or even an hour, when the weather admitted of going abroad; and if at any time he was inclined to fret, it was when kept at home by rain or deep snow. I think I may also affirm, without fear of contradiction, that there scarcely ever was a man who gave his time or his assistance to his poorer fellow creatures more willingly than he did. Whatever he may have accomplished, in another way it was done solely by keeping one object steadily in view, and devoting to it the whole of those hours which others devote to amusement, idle conversation, and visiting acquaintances. The former of these, except in so far as it was connected with his favourite pursuit, he knew only by name; and for the latter, though he willingly went where-

ever he thought he could be of service to a poor or a suffering fellow creature, except upon two or three occasions, after being repeatedly invited, he never lost an hour in paying visits. So far, indeed, was he from being a lover of gossip, that after having been prevented from reading or writing for some hours, by company which he did not consider very interesting, I have sometimes heard him say, with a melancholy air, "I have lost an evening."

By the end of the year 1830, the disease in his stomach had begun to produce symptoms of another kind; and for the six following years, he was seldom wholly free from a painful malady which frequently proves fatal, and which, after it has advanced beyond a certain stage, can only be cured by a dangerous operation. The dyspeptic tendency, too, had increased, rather than diminished; and at this time, in about an hour, or an hour and a-half after taking his dinner, he was often affected with a faintness, and a sort of false hunger, to such a degree that his legs would scarcely support him, yet day after day he drudged on at his work; and that he might perform the usual quantity, during those intervals of comparative health which he enjoyed, he wrought harder than he would have otherwise done. Between this and the end of 1836, the state of his system was such, that lying longer in bed than five hours at a time, produced such a degree of uneasiness as to render it painful rather than refreshing;

and as a necessary consequence, he rose in general about three in summer, and at a little past four in winter. These long and solitary mornings he spent for the most part over a fire which he had himself kindled; and when I rose, which was not till some hours later, I found him always employed either in writing or reading; with respect to the latter, though I never questioned him upon the subject, from the circumstance of his Bible being always lying beside him, it appeared that he was in the habit of reading a portion of Scripture before he engaged in any other book. To this period of his history he alludes in "Lines written on the Last Night of the Year 1832,"—"Sacramental Lines,"—one of the "Spring Songs," and some other pieces which will be found in the following pages. The complaints thus preying upon his constitution, had impressed his mind with a conviction that his earthly span was to be a brief one; and this conviction gave a sad and solemn turn to his thoughts, which frequently manifested itself in his composition. Nor was this all: if it "saddened o'er his line," it also sent him to seek consolation, and a compensation for those enjoyments of time which Providence had denied, in the truths of religion, and the contemplation of that happiness above, to which, when the toils and sufferings of this life are ended, the humble Christian may hope to rise. To the truth of this statement, he has left his own testimony in one of the very last of his poetical productions,

entitled, "Lines on seeing from a distance the Sun Rising over a Hill, at the base of which the Author was bred."

Of these complaints, however, he seldom spoke even to his friends. During the first three years of his illness, once, and only once, did he mention the subject to the present writer, along with his conviction that they would sooner or later cut short his existence; and then, though urged to take medical advice, he did not seem to think that medicine, in his case, could be of any service. In his writing books, however, there are several medical advertisements, which he had copied from newspapers, but for the medicines themselves, he never found time to inquire; and farther than by strict care in regulating his diet, and conscientiously abstaining from all sorts of spirits and malt liquors—both of which hurt him—he tried no other means for his recovery. His religious feelings, too, except in so far as they manifested themselves in his writings, were, in a great measure, kept to himself.

> As valour lies in hearts, and not in swords,
> Religion is in thoughts, and not in words,

was a sentiment of his own, and he certainly acted upon it. He had heard a common saying, to the purport, that "Religion had suffered more from the inconsistencies of its pretended friends, than from the malice of its bitterest enemies," and he was determined that such a charge should never be brought against him. To see men's actions,

and hear their words, is often a matter of very little importance; but the feelings and principles from which these proceed is a different thing: and here I cannot have the slightest reason to doubt his motives for being silent upon a number of subjects on which others consider themselves called upon to say much. If the conversation was innocent, he joined in it without attempting to give it any turn whatever; and if it was otherwise, he either left it, or was silent. When health and weather permitted, he had always been regular in his attendance upon public ordinances, and at all times punctual in his private devotions; to these he still adhered, and thus no outward change was observable. But if his profession in religious matters was not flaming, his morality was of a kind which will stand the severest scrutiny; it was, in short, regulated by the Scripture maxim, "As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye so to them even likewise." In our little transactions with others, I have frequently heard him say, "We must not consider what the world accounts justice, but how we should like to be treated ourselves, if we were in such a one's circumstances." So far was he from ever trying to over-reach others, or to enrich himself at their expense, if any one did a trifling job for him, he always wished them to have something more than common rewards; and, though shy in accepting favours, if any one conferred a favour either on himself or the family, he could seldom rest satisfied

till he had seen it amply repaid. These may seem bold statements, and I should have hesitated to make them, had I not felt confident of being able to appeal to others for their truth; and with this confidence, I should have been doing injustice to his memory had I altogether suppressed them. His religion was the religion of the heart—not that of the head and the lip; his morality was equally a matter of conscience, and it were perhaps well for the world if only one-half of those who profess to be Christians were actuated by the same principles.

Early in the summer of 1832, from having exerted himself beyond his strength in drawing a heavy garden-roller, on a plot of ground which had been recently dug, he brought on bleeding at the gums—to this cause, at least, he himself attributed the disease; and for the greater part of the following year he continued to spit considerable quantities of blood at intervals. Through the whole of his sufferings, however, when in the society of others, his deportment was, for the most part, cheerful. The spring, and early summer, when "Nature clothes herself with flowers," always seemed to have a cheering effect upon his spirits, and it would almost appear that this season operated favourably upon his health also; yet the long winter evenings, when he could devote a considerable portion of his time to reading and literary pursuits, was the season which he enjoyed most. Though it may be easily supposed that the

idea of his being destined to be only a sojourner upon earth for a short time, would make him careless in providing for the future, still, in the midst of the most gloomy prospects, and when his hopes of life being prolonged were at the very lowest ebb, he never for a moment relaxed his diligence. As an evidence of this, it may be mentioned, that in the summer of 1831, when I had nearly abandoned writing, from the idea that the time devoted to it was little better than lost, he thus addressed me, "Ye body,* ye are doing nothing now." I stated my reasons. "Let us try," was his answer. "If Burns had abandoned writing in a fit of despondency, he would never have obtained the £900 which he afterwards acquired by an edition of his works. We are poor; it must be long before we can save the veriest trifle from our miserable earnings, and if at any future period we could make only a few pounds by writing, it were worth looking after for our parents' sake, if for nothing else."

As another evidence of his industry, and a proof that the "miserable earnings," as he termed them, were not squandered upon idle indulgences, it

* He had heard this phrase first from a little girl; it struck him that there was something particularly humorous, and, at the same time, endearing in the tone and manner of the child; and, though he always spoke with propriety when addressing others, in speaking to his brother, when no one else was listening, it had become one of those familiar expressions which he frequently used.

may be also mentioned, that from them, previous to November 1832, about £14 had been again saved. In the spring of 1830, the reader will recollect that he was rather in debt; little more than two years had passed since then; and when it is known that his earnings seldom exceeded £19 in any year—that, besides himself, he had at least one of his parents to support—that he was in the habit of giving considerable sums in charity, and, perhaps, still more for books—some idea of his personal expenditure may be formed. This could not possibly exceed £7 per annum, food, clothing, and every thing included.

Having thus mentioned his little savings, I hope the reader will pardon me for stating the manner in which they were expended. On the 8th of November 1832, the writer of this sketch was once more subjected to the effects of gunpowder, by an accident in a quarry; and before he was able to resume his work, the last farthing of the £14 was gone, and the author of the following poems, and the narrator of his story, were left to begin the world again, with only the clothes on their backs; and these, having already seen severe service, promised soon to leave them. While I would apologize to the reader for troubling him with these particulars, I must confess that it gives me a melancholy pleasure to be able to bring them forward as a proof of the never-failing kindness, disinterested benevolence, and unshrinking and unconquerable perseverance of one so little known,

In 1831, Mr F——, the overseer on the estate of Inchrye, who was his immediate employer, having found a more profitable engagement, proposed that he should take the situation, and offered to recommend him in the proper quarter as an individual qualified for it. To this, however, he was averse, both on account of his youth, and from the circumstance of never having served an apprenticeship; and though he managed the whole concern for the proprietor, from the month of August, at which time Mr F—— left the place, till Martinmas, he afterwards resumed his humble occupation as a day-labourer in the plantations, under a new master.

He was now in his nineteenth year; and by this time he had begun to carry a book, with a slip of paper and a pencil, constantly in his pocket; and if, in the course of his solitary labours by day, a good idea occurred, he sometimes took such notes of it as would enable him to recall it in the evening. About this time, "The Happy Home," "The Shout of Victory," "Song to the Rising Sun," and a number of other productions, the original MSS. of which are stitched up with these, were composed. The first of "Hymns of the Churchyard," of which there are three, owes its origin to the same period; and I shall never forget the time and the place at which I first heard him read it. The house which we inhabited was long and narrow, with a small vacant space at the farther end of it, lighted by a single pane of glass;

and to it, on the summer evenings, when he had the advantage of daylight till it was almost ten o'clock, he sometimes retired with his papers. On one of these evenings I had taken sanctuary in this quarter before he came home. The sun shone cheerfully in at the little window, giving an air of warmth to the place, and making visible a long level streak of its dim smoky atmosphere. When he arrived, with his writing materials in his hand, he leaned upon the chest where my papers were lying, and said, "If you would only stop for a few minutes, man, I would let you hear my last production." He then read, with a low musical voice, the lines beginning, "Ah me! this is a sad and silent city," which will be found in the following pages. Of these, the first verse rose spontaneously while walking in the churchyard during the interval of public worship, and the others had been added on the Monday morning.

As early as 1829, when he was only seventeen, he had planned and wished to write a poem of the didactic kind, which, as he intended, should resemble, in some particulars, Cowper's "Task;" that is, he was to treat in it any subject which struck his fancy, observing only a natural transition from one to another. The only part of it, however, which he had finished, has been already given in this sketch as "Evening Songs;" and it was not till 1832 that he found leisure to prosecute this undertaking. Being dissatisfied with the original name, after thinking upon several others,

he at last adopted VIGILS OF THE NIGHT as the most appropriate; and upon this subject, or rather upon the various subjects which the name was intended to embrace, he continued to work at intervals, till the spring of 1835, when, from a conviction of the unprofitable nature of his employment, in an age when poetry is so little thought of, he gave it up. In the course of this long period, when other avocations intervened, or other subjects called away his attention, it had been often laid aside for months together, but it was never wholly forgotten. Of his style, and capabilities for such an undertaking, the following, which is the opening of the poem, will give the reader some idea:—

'Tis summer; and the flowery fields are fair,
The trees are green, and calm the gentle air.
Of all the seasons of the varying year,
This to the rural muse shall still be dear;
For now her vigil of the night grows sweet,
With arching leaves aloft, and roses at her feet.

'Tis night: the high and holy heavens above
Are bright with majesty, and blue with love.
All, all is silent! even the zephyry breeze
Hath ceased to sport among the rustling trees;
The lake, unrippled, like the good man's breast,
Reflects each image by the skies impress'd;
The long grass in the meadow gently bends
Beneath the dew, which silently descends;
The stars are twinkling, and the sober moon
Gilds with her lustre all the leaves of June;
While lichen-cover'd rock, and glassy stream,
Grow doubly sweet beneath her hallow'd beam,

Which, slanting softly down the mossy dell,
Unfolds a scene where eremite might dwell,
And from the solemn solitude around
Draws food for thought, aerial or profound.
Sparkling o'er pebbly shelves, the gurgling rill
Makes dreamy music to the listening hill,
And rises into cones of foamy snow
Where'er a stone obstructs its murmuring flow.

Above the drooping elms, which sadly guard
The dreary precincts of the damp churchyard,
Yon hoary spire points to the cloudless skies,
As if to teach our grovelling thoughts to rise;
And yon old ruin*—roofless, rent, and gray—
Seems warning mortals of their own decay.
How many ages, barbarous and rude,
Upon that bank of daisies hath it stood?
How many changing masters hath it seen,
In "pride of place," perambulate its green?
How many funerals, to its gothic gate,
Hath it beheld approach in gloomy state?
How many beings more, not yet alive,
Shall these dilapidated walls survive? &c.

From this the author naturally passes to some observations on the shortness and uncertainty of human life; then to the happiness of that state of being which exists beyond the grave, and those doubts with which sceptics have endeavoured to darken the prospects of humanity. He next pro-

* This description accords exactly to the old church at Abdie, which stands in the middle of the burying-ground where the author's dust now reposes. The ruin is one of considerable antiquity, having been a place of worship previous to the Reformation.

ceeds to the authenticity of Scripture, and brings forward arguments to prove it from those prophecies which have been already literally fulfilled. Tyre, Babylon, and Nineveh—what they once were, and what they now are, together with the predictions concerning them, and the events which produced those awful changes which have passed over them—all figure in his descriptions. Upon these subjects he had finished about sixty pages of closely and carefully written manuscript, bestowing great pains both upon the argument and the composition. He had also sketched as much more as, if collected and transcribed, would probably make nearly a hundred pages. This, according to his usual custom, is written upon scraps of all sorts of paper, a number of which had been so soiled and crumpled before they fell into his hands, that the thoughts committed to them, in some instances, cannot be decyphered without difficulty. In this portion of his labours he has drawn arguments for the immortality of the soul from a great number of sources, introducing, as he went along, whatever he thought would tend to illustrate or enforce the truths he was endeavouring to prove. Though he gave up the subject for reasons already stated, he had always entertained the idea of being able to finish it at some future period; and had he lived to do so, it would have been at least another proof of his indefatigable industry. The length of the poem being an insurmountable objection to its appearing along with those now

offered to the public, I have been induced to take this opportunity of noticing it; for I should be sorry to think that the abilities of one so deservedly dear, and the labours of such a life as his, were to be estimated by the scanty specimens which can be pressed into the present volume.

"Vigils of the Night" being considered a work of years, and as he was anxious to make some attempt upon the public of a less hazardous description, in the spring of 1833 it was agreed that we should conjointly try to produce a small volume of scriptural pieces, for which he had devised "The Poetical Preacher" as a fitting name. The nature of this undertaking may be partly understood from the three specimens given in the following pages, which were all he had finished when he was taken ill of influenza, which confined him for a length of time. Just as he was beginning to recover from this disorder, he was seized with measles: the case, though not dangerous, was rather a severe one, and left him very weak. He had only resumed his usual employment a few days, when he was attacked by small-pox; and before he had fully recovered from these successive illnesses, the autumn was far advanced. By this time the scheme was, in a great measure, forgotten; and before it recurred again, he was convinced that poetry would not do for a first attempt. With the little prospect which then existed of being able to publish, he never considered the stop which was thus put to "The Poetical

Preacher" as a misfortune. But the effects of his repeated illnesses were felt in another way; for if at the commencement of the season he had been beginning the world with only the clothes on his back, after being so long prevented from earning anything, at its close it may be naturally supposed that his circumstances would have retrograded rather than improved.

In the beginning of 1835, the great difficulty of obtaining access to the public still remained—a difficulty of which he had not been fully aware when he commenced writing; but after having devoted so much time to preparing his mind for this species of labour, and spent so many wakeful hours in committing his thoughts to paper, he was loth to give up the idea of ever being able to turn it to any account. He had heard that few publishers were willing to incur the risk of publishing, at their own expense, the productions of obscure individuals; publishing upon his own account was altogether out of the question; the plan of doing so by subscription he looked upon as unworthy of a man who had any other means of earning his subsistence, inasmuch as it was foisting upon subscribers an article of the worth of which they were not permitted to judge; and in this dilemma he believed that a connection with one or other of the periodicals was almost the only means by which he could ever hope to derive any benefit from his abilities as a writer. In the month of February, he accordingly began to devote every

minute of spare time which he could command to composing a prose article of considerable length upon "Irish Absenteeism"—a subject which was then agitating the country, and for that reason chosen by him as one that was likely to have some interest. This was finished some time in March following, and sent off to the conductors of a widely-circulated magazine, with a letter, stating the author's circumstances, and giving them to understand, that though he was anxious to be of some service to his fellow-creatures, as he was not very ambitious, they might have the manuscript and copyright for nothing, if they chose to print it. Such was his first attempt, and of it he heard nothing for nearly five months, at the end of which period the MS. was returned, with the following note:—

——— 29th Aug. 1835.

Dear Sir,—I am returning all the contributions sent me for which I have no room, and they are many. Yours is very good, and does you great credit. But I have already so many contributors that I cannot add to the number. With many thanks for your intentions, I return the MS. and remain, &c.

This was one "door of hope" effectually closed against him. But in the course of the summer I had succeeded in obtaining some trifling rewards for two stories which had been accepted in another quarter: we knew no separate interests, and to this periodical his attention was now turned. With a view to it, he had written four separate papers, entitled "Amiability," "The Pleasures of Drunk-

enness," "The Pleasures of Poverty," and an Essay on the "Sufferings of the Poor." These, together with the papers on Ireland, a story called "Love and Death," and some other MSS. which he has left tied up in the same parcel, would form a small volume. At the same time he had projected a series of stories, which were to follow each other at such intervals as he could find leisure to write them, under the general name of "The Mirror of Humble Manners;" plans and sketches of some of these are still lying among his other papers; but before a single line of what he had prepared, or was preparing, could be rendered available, a slight misunderstanding broke off the connection, and his literary prospects were once more as dark as ever they had been in his life.

To do justice to his character, it should have been stated, that in the midst of his multitudinous labours, besides attending regularly to that employment upon which he had to depend for his own support, and that of his aged parents, who, in the situation in which they were placed, could earn almost nothing, he had lent a large share of his assistance, for several years, in cultivating the gardens of three widows.* From the month of March, till the gardening season was over, it was his custom to work from five in the morning till it was time to go abroad, putting such crops as

* On one particular season he assisted in cultivating five gardens, beside that of his parents, without ever being an hour absent from his regular employment.

we required ourselves into the ground. When he returned from the labours of the day at six in the evening, he despatched a hasty supper, went to the place where his assistance was expected, and wrought while daylight lasted, or, when the season was more advanced, till ten at night. Widow with him was a sacred name: he had read in his Bible the denunciations of wrath against those who oppressed or troubled them, and the constant injunctions to treat them with kindness and sympathy; and in whatever light others might regard them, he never could think of allowing any personal consideration to stand between him and those services, upon which he considered them as having a just claim from the Word of God. So severe, however, were the labours which he imposed upon himself in this way, that, as the spring advanced, I have frequently heard him say, "I am almost scared, man, to think that the yard-season is coming on again." Upon such conduct it becomes not a brother to make any remark. There was nothing heroic, as the term is usually applied, in these attempts to benefit others; and yet it requires a greater degree of heroism, perhaps, than most people are aware of, to enable a man to persist for years in a course of labour and self-denial, from which he expects no earthly reward, and upon which the busy world will not once deign to look.

Up to the latter part of 1835, the whole of his writing had been prosecuted as stealthily as if it had been a crime punishable by law. There being

but one apartment in the house, it was his custom to write by the fire, with an old copy-book, upon which his paper lay, resting on his knee, and this, through life, was his only writing-desk. On the table, which was within reach, an old newspaper was kept constantly lying, and as soon as the footsteps of any one were heard approaching the door, copy-book, paper, pens, and inkstand, were thrust under this covering, and before the visiter came in, he had in general a book in his hand, and appeared to have been reading.* With the unremitting vigilance thus exercised, it would have scarcely been known that he could write at all; and, had it not been for his mother, who, with a vanity which may perhaps be pardoned, was in the habit of occasionally reading such parts of his papers as fell into her hands to her acquaintances, few would have suspected him of any thing of the kind. Through her, however, it came to be believed in the neighbourhood that he had a predilection for writing; but the belief produced nothing except some additional work in the way of writing letters for others, which he always appeared happy to perform, and some solicitations for copies of verses, and the like.

From the constant care which was necessary to avoid being detected, and the frequent interruptions to which it subjected him, the mode of proceeding just noticed was found to be highly

* *Tales and Sketches of the Scottish Peasantry* were written exactly in the manner here described.

disagreeable; and he now wished to have a separate apartment to which he could retire with his papers. This had been a long cherished idea, and with a view to its accomplishment, a larger window than that formerly noticed had been fitted into the wall at the farther end of the house. A fire-place was now wanted; and to supply this deficiency, we commenced operations about the 1st of November. After nearly a week of hard labour in the evenings, the work was finished. Though it was then almost midnight, a fire was put into the grate to try how it would vent; but from the circumstance of the chimney-top being considerably lower than the ridge, to his utter disappointment, the smoke and flame, instead of going upward, issued from between the bars! On the following evening the whole was demolished; and with no better materials than three old paling stakes for jambs and lintel, two round poles, which were to serve as supports between these and the roof, some ropes made of straw, and a quantity of mud scraped from the highway, we commenced our operations in a quarter where they were more likely to be successful. When the whole was finished, it looked neat when contrasted with the rest of the house; and this he considered a greater triumph of genius than any thing in the performance of which he had hitherto been engaged. For one evening he was allowed to enjoy himself over a fire, the smoke of which was fairly carried off by a vent which he had assisted to construct; there

was still much to do in the way of covering the apartment, so as to conceal the smoky rafters overhead; but he already looked forward to long evenings of uninterrupted literary enjoyment, and a winter of unprecedented comfort, when, on the following day, he was engaged to go to Inchrye as overseer, and thus the whole of the labour which he had previously bestowed on the old house at Lochend was in vain. I should not have mentioned a circumstance so trifling, had it not been in exact keeping with the whole tenor of his fortune, which consisted of little else than a series of disappointments of one sort or another. This, however, was not regarded as one at the time, but rather as a most fortunate occurrence.

Mr Y——, the late overseer, had died in the month of August preceding; as on the former occasion, he had continued to manage the whole concern between that time and Martinmas; and though he had taken no decided step to procure the situation for himself, and had no expectations of obtaining it, he had been strongly recommended by some friends, and thus his employers had thought proper to promote him to the place of a master, where he had formerly been only a servant. His income was now £26 yearly, with fodder for a cow, which was a very considerable improvement upon his previous earnings; and though he did not propose to give up his literary pursuits—as the saving of a little money to provide against exigencies, and make his parents more comfortable

in their declining years, had been his principal object, and he had now the prospect of accomplishing his purpose by other means—the circumstance of dropping them whenever his attention was required for any thing else gave him no uneasiness. An assistant being now in request, I accompanied him in that capacity; and on the evening of the 11th of November 1835, we went thither, taking bed-clothes, and such other articles as we thought we should require, with us on a wheel-barrow.

Being the sole occupants of a solitary house, the new situation seemed for a time to be even better adapted for evening studies than that he had left, and he did not fail to improve his opportunities. But a number of repairs and alterations being required on the estate, the proprietors wished a written report as to the means to be employed, and the most economical method of effecting them; and as he now considered his powers, both of body and mind, engaged in the service of a master, shortly after entering upon his new labours he gave up literature entirely, and devoted the whole of his time during the evenings to this single object. By inventing a very simple instrument for taking angles, and another for laying them down upon paper, plans of the various fields and plantations were drawn, with what appeared to be the necessary alterations marked upon them. An estimate of the probable expense of repairing the hot-houses, together with the means by which it

could be done, was made out; and as a proof of the correctness of his ideas, it may be mentioned, that in executing these repairs, on the following year, the very plan which he had pointed out was adopted by a new proprietor. Tradesmen were consulted as to the expense of repairing some old houses, and thus making them the means of drawing a yearly rent. The cost of draining a piece of meadow land was calculated, and the advantages of having it done pointed out. A plan was proposed for enclosing a part of the plantations with a permanent fence, and the expense of keeping up temporary and permanent fences, for a number of years, compared, as an argument for adopting the latter, &c. For months during the winter, the whole of his evenings were devoted to this purpose, while by day he wrought as busily as he had done before in the plantations. The report was at last finished and given in; and though it brought him no rewards of any sort, when his employers expressed themselves satisfied with what he had done, he accounted himself amply repaid.

I have no intention of troubling the reader with the mere routine of his daily labours, farther than may be necessary to show what may be accomplished by industry, without the adventitious aids of education, and the manner in which he endeavoured to discharge the duty he owed to his employers. In the spring there was a great amount of labour to perform in enclosing grass

fields, which were to be let for pasture, while at this season the hot-houses would have required nearly the whole of his attention. That no expense might be incurred which he could possibly save, he undertook a large share of the new fences himself: at these he wrought diligently during the usual working hours; and that the hot-houses might not be neglected, his mornings and evenings, as early and as late as daylight would serve, were devoted to arranging the clusters, and tying down the young shoots of the vines—his father attending to the temperature while he was absent. With the rigid attention which he bestowed on them, things seemed to prosper: the enclosing of the fields had been completed in good time, a luxuriant crop of grapes was advancing to maturity; and his hopes of being able to benefit his employers by his industry, and of being benefited himself by his improved income, were high; when, some time about the end of June, the estate was sold, and the new proprietor almost immediately intimated that he would not require his services beyond the year for which he was engaged. That portion of his history which intervenes between this and Martinmas, I pass over in silence, and return to notice a few of his literary productions.

In the course of the winter and spring, during those short intervals when his evenings were not required for other purposes, he had finished "The Orphan Wanderer," composed some other short poems, which will appear in the following pages,

and written an Essay on Poetry, consisting of twenty-four pages. In the last of these he endeavours to show the absurd purposes to which poetry has been frequently applied, and the manner in which it might be made subservient to improving the religious and moral feelings of society. He had also sketched the plan of some stories entitled "The Adventures of a Fancy-man;" and begun and finished "The Decline and Fall of a Ghost," which may now be seen in "Tales and Sketches of the Scottish Peasantry."* About

* In the composition of this work, it was at first intended that he should have taken a larger share, but circumstances prevented him from doing so; and the above-mentioned story, the "Dedication," "A Wish," "A Vision of Death," and "An Infant's Death-bed," were his only contributions. The idea of writing *a volume* had occurred, after every thing else failed, as the only means by which the Authors could ever hope to derive the smallest advantage from all the time they had wasted in this way. The MS. was finished and taken to Edinburgh some time in July 1836; and had it not been for its falling into the hands of one who ever after proved a steady friend, it is highly probable it might have been brought back and burned in disgust; but after an interval of eight months, he succeeded in discovering a publisher. Literary fame being no part of the object of its obscure Authors when they undertook it, the original title page was simply *Tales and Sketches of the Scottish Peasantry, by the Author of no other book;* and under this designation they considered themselves perfectly secure. The Publisher, however, wished to have the name of the principal Author; but on the latter representing at some length his motives for wishing to elude notice, it was given up, and nothing more was

four years before, a Memoir of his Grandmother, Annie M'Donald, and some extracts from her correspondence, had been got up and given to the public by the Rev. J. Brodie; the work was favourably received; and as he had access to a great number of her other letters, in the hope of being able to make some provision for his two maternal aunts, he was anxious to try another volume of the same kind. With this object in view, short as were the intervals of leisure which he could command, he had written an original sketch of his grandmother's life, considerably shorter, and differing in other respects from that appended to the former work. But though the MS. was completed, a number of circumstances prevented him from ever offering it to a publisher, and it now lies among his other papers, as an additional proof of that industry from which he was destined to reap nothing. By this time it was known that he could write; and at the request of some individuals connected with that work, he had also contributed some short poems to the Christian Herald. He was still averse from appearing in public as an author, and the only signature attached to these pieces was that of "A Fifeshire

heard of the matter till a letter, announcing the publication of the work, stated, that "the name had been given after all." It was then too late to remedy the error of having given only *one* name; and thus the subject of the present notice was never known as the Author of the pieces already mentioned beyond his own neighbourhood.

Forester." He soon came to understand, however, that aspirants for poetical fame were so numerous, that the conductors of those periodicals never paid for such contributions—it being considered rather a favour to give them a place. Notoriety was no part of his object; a competition of this kind was contrary to his nature, and thus he made no farther attempt to keep up the connection.

Some time in the month of October, the same year, a gentleman, whose property lay mostly in the southern part of Fifeshire, advertised for a forester. The newspaper containing the advertisement chanced to fall in his way, and as he considered himself in every respect qualified for the situation, and, moreover, believed that it was his duty to adopt any measure which might forward his own interest, and thereby enable him to provide more effectually for the comfort of his aged friends, he immediately wrote to the gentleman, stating that he was ready to accept of the situation, if it could be obtained upon reasonable terms. In the answer which this elicited, he was told that the situation was only a subordinate one, and therefore not likely to be such as he would accept. This to him was no objection. The gentleman was expected to be present at a public exhibition, in a town distant about fifteen miles, on the following day; at the same place he would have an opportunity of procuring a written recommendation from one who should have been

well qualified to judge of his character and abilities, and for it he started long before day-break next morning. The individual to whom he applied began by stating what is in these cases a very common objection—namely, the difficulty of recommending him, which arose from the circumstance of his "never having served a regular apprenticeship to the business of a forester." Irritated by some treatment which he had previously received in another quarter, he answered with some warmth, that, "after having wrought for seven years in the plantations of Inchrye, during which period he had been left wholly to his own discretion, if he could not be recommended as an under-forester, besides being totally unfit for the situation which he still held, he must be a far greater blockhead than most of those who are usually distinguished by that opprobrious epithet." The other immediately seemed to think, sat down, and expressed in writing, which I have still by me, the perfect confidence which he could repose in his "ability, industry, and honesty." With this in his pocket, his next object was to discover the gentleman who had previously advertised for a forester. At an inn, in the yard of which stood a great number of carriages, he found his servant; but whether it was that the master really could not be seen, or that he—accustomed only to win or lose his way by the most straightforward means—had forgotten to propitiate the servant in the usual manner, I cannot now tell;

but after waiting till it was almost night, and being told repeatedly that " ——— could not be seen at present," he left the place without seeing him, and on a dark, wet, stormy evening, had to travel fifteen miles on foot, before he could reach home with the news of his disappointment.

When he arrived, I enquired eagerly as to his success. But instead of answering my question directly, while he laid aside his hat, and wiped the sweat from his brow with his handkerchief, he said in a slow measured tone, " I have done with gentlemen, their servants, their places, and their patronage, now and for ever!" and in this he kept his word: for when, nearly a year after, some influential individuals offered to procure a situation for him in one of the provincial banks, through delicacy, and a sense of that civility which was due to others made him conceal his reasons, he at once determined to reject it.

On some occasions he was particularly sensitive: that gentlemen should be so deeply engaged in these pursuits that they " could not be seen" for a few minutes by one who had travelled so far with no other object in view, appeared to him no subject for encomium; and the above incident, along with some other circumstances which cannot be here narrated, gave him a very bad idea of the world. The feelings thus excited, as he himself acknowledges in a letter to a gentleman in Edinburgh, of which a sketch is still in my possession, occupied his mind for months afterwards,

and even manifested themselves in his writings. Of his sentiments about this period, the "Address to Time," which was written in the autumn of the same year, will give a better idea than any thing which another could offer.

On the evening of the 10th of November, after it was dark, I assisted him in removing his bed-clothes, &c. on a wheel-barrow. When we had got some way on the road, he said, that "whatever we might have left behind us, he did not think any one could accuse us of having brought more from Inchrye than we had taken thither;" and it was with feelings of satisfaction to which for months he had been a stranger, that he once more took his accustomed seat by the fire in his former home. It was not his manner to stand upon punctilios: whatever was useful, and could be honestly come by, was, in his estimation, honourable; and instead of vainly striving to maintain a factitious rank in society, he at once commenced work as a common labourer on the public roads. The preparations which had been broken off on the previous year were resumed, and in a few evenings more he had the satisfaction of taking his seat by a cheerful fire in the long-contemplated little sanctuary at the farther end of the house.

The winter evenings were still to dispose of: profitless as literature now appeared, not having any thing else to which they could be properly applied, he resumed the writing of verses, which was still most congenial to his disposition, and

had finished some pieces, with the intention of making up a small volume, which was to have been called "Pictures of Poverty," and of which the "Orphan Wanderer," already noticed, was to have formed a part. While thus engaged, he had one evening taken up a newspaper, in which a series of Lectures on Political Economy, about to be delivered in one of the provincial towns, was advertised. The subject attracted his attention; and, after laying down the paper, and pondering over it for a few minutes, "Do you see, man," he said, "I think I have now hit upon a most important subject, which, hitherto, no writer appears to have taken up." He then proceeded to explain his meaning, by saying that "it was neither Political Economy, nor Rural Economy, nor Domestic Economy, to which he alluded, but that sort of economy which we had ourselves practised; and which, if it were adopted by others, might enable a greater number of people to live independently on their own earnings, than had as yet thought of doing so." This was the first hint of Lectures on Practical Economy; and it formed the subject of conversation for two or three succeeding evenings. It was considered that we had ourselves frequently attempted to relieve beggars, and others who were in distress, to the very uttermost of our limited abilities, without producing any palpable effect; and if we could succeed in teaching only a few how to avoid bringing themselves into embarrassed and dependent circumstances, that it would be even more pa-

triotic than trying to relieve them after they had become the victims of poverty and misery. The thing, moreover, might be rendered subservient to our own interest: we might deliver a series of lectures upon this subject in the whole of the towns and villages around, selling admission tickets like other lecturers—and, when the thing had acquired popularity in this way, sell the copyright to a publisher. Such was the picture which presented itself to his glowing imagination; and such, it may be added, are the day-dreams with which mortals too often deceive themselves!

To point out, in a few commonplace observations, the propriety of saving a little money when unencumbered with a family, and the comfort and ease of mind which such an acquisition might be expected to confer, together with the most likely means for obtaining it, would have been an easy task. But then to convince multitudes that the prosperity of the country, as well as the comfort of individuals, depended in a great measure upon every one producing, or saving something, over and above what he consumed, was a different matter. At this he aimed, and for this purpose he saw that a number of popular errors would require to be exposed, and some first principles unfolded and explained in such a manner as to make them easily understood. Of these, both writers had a sort of glimmering idea of their own; but they were not, as yet, so fully master of them as to be able to lay them clearly before others. To

their dismay, they found that neither themselves nor their few acquaintances had any books to which they could refer for information. They were not, however, to be deterred from what vanity prompted them to consider a useful undertaking, by difficulties; and with no other guide than an article on "accumulation," in the Penny Cyclopædia, they commenced their task. Thus they had to grope their way at almost every step, like the inventor of an art; and with all their care, frequently got into errors, which had to be corrected afterwards. To those who are curious in literary matters, it may not perhaps be uninteresting to know, that these lectures were at first written upon brown paper bags ripped open, shreds of paper which had come to the house with tea, sugar, tobacco, &c. in short, every thing which would carry ink, while the writers had no better writing-desk than their knees. The whole of the writing, too, was performed with two quills, which were more than half cut down before they were applied to that purpose.

A correct copy, upon good paper, and in a fair and readable hand, was the next thing required; and when this had been finished, which was not till March 1837, the greatest difficulty of all remained to be surmounted. The labour of committing to memory was soon found to be intolerable; and to individuals bred in the seclusion of a remote cottage, it may easily be supposed that the idea of coming forward to address a promis-

cuous audience would be in itself sufficiently tormenting. As the time drew near at which the attempt must be made, the difficulties attending it appeared altogether insurmountable; and, though it was done with reluctance, all thoughts of becoming public teachers were at last given up. But as it appeared a pity to lose so much paper and labour, the lectures were, some time afterwards, despatched to the same friend who had taken charge of the MS. of the Tales and Sketches.

Some former events had made it doubtful if this projector would be permitted to remain much longer among those "Native Scenes" which, in one of his poetical efforts, he has endeavoured to celebrate; and before the end of May, from recent occurrences, it appeared all but certain that the last year of his sojourn there was already on the wing. With the world before him, for himself he would have cared little; but what affected him most, was the circumstance of his mother having become warmly attached to the hut in which her boys had grown up to men, and the locks of her husband had been bleached by time to an almost snowy whiteness; and for her sake he too could have been contented to linger there, though he could not bring himself to what he considered the degrading alternative of humbly suing for leave to do so. He did not suppose, however, that these feelings would have had much weight with others; and thus he deemed it prudent to be silently and assiduously endeavouring to provide against the worst, whether it should

happen or not. He saw that his parents, from age and infirmity, would be ill able to endure the bustle and fatigue of removing at every term, as is frequently the case with poor people in the country, who have nothing but the caprice of landlords to trust to; and for this reason he, as well as the narrator of his story, was anxious to have some asylum for them, to which these vicissitudes would not reach. We had again saved a small sum of money, and after many deliberations, it was at last resolved to venture upon the building of a house.

Having fixed upon the site, and settled as to the feu-duty to be paid for the ground, our next business was to provide as many stones as we thought would be required. This being accomplished, on the 26th of July, 1837, with the aid of one mason whom we had engaged to work along with us, we laid the foundation of our future dwelling;—and had it been known to the world that we proposed to finish a house thirty-six feet in length, and twenty in breadth, without asking or taking any assistance except such as we could pay for at the ordinary rate, and with no more wealth than two bolls of oatmeal, to serve as summer provision, the thews and sinews of two human beings, and about £30 in money, reflecting individuals would have probably pronounced us fit for Bedlam: yet such was the case. In less than a week, the mason was called away to another job, but we still persevered. The drudgery which

the poor author of the following poems now underwent, was such, that few, perhaps, would have cared for encountering it. He left home every morning before five o'clock, travelled three miles, commenced work immediately, and wrought till nearly half-past seven in the evening, with no more rest than was absolutely necessary to swallow his breakfast and dinner. The last of these, indeed, which consisted exclusively of bread, he frequently eat from his pocket, working the whole of the time. He had then to travel three miles back to his home; and, after having been thus engaged in hard labour and travelling for nearly fifteen hours, it may be believed that he was sufficiently tired before he reached it—yet day after day the same process was repeated, except during those short intervals when the mason wrought along with him, and then he dropped work at the usual time. Had it not been for a vision of the future which was now before him, it is probable that even he might have shrunk from this dreary task. But, in imagination, he already saw the house finished, the garden enclosed, with the crops put into the ground; and his father, now venerable from age, walking through it on a fine summer day, or, if he wished for exercise, employed with a hoe in the little enclosure which he would then be able to call his own. With such illusions—for, as Providence had decreed, they deserved no other name—we used to cheer our journey homeward; and to his warm heart they would have been

a sufficient inducement to encounter still greater difficulties than those with which he had to contend. More stones having been provided than were necessary, the house was raised to two storeys. On the 9th of September, the walls were finished; and before the 30th of the same month, the roof was on—an earthen floor laid—the lower flat plastered—part of the partitions built—and doors and windows provided, with very little assistance from tradesmen. With the exception of the carriage of three cart-loads of lime, every thing had been paid ready money. But by this time the last farthing of the £30 was expended—the stock of provisions was completely exhausted—and the author of the following pages was glad to engage in such work as he could find, to procure the necessaries of life for himself and friends, and provide a little money to defray the expense of removing, which had now become inevitable.

On the 9th of November, 1837, he came to that habitation at the building of which he had toiled so arduously; and when he heard his father say, "Dear me, John, man, I am perfectly surprised to see that great house you have reared up for us," it is probable that he considered himself overpaid for all his labours. From the account just given, the reader will be able to form some idea of his ingenuity in general matters. Whenever any thing had become indispensable, he never wasted time in questions as to who could be got

to perform it, but set himself to work immediately: if he had seen a thing once done, he could, in general, do it over again if he chose to exert himself; and, in an emergency, I have frequently seen him finish a job with tools so bad that scarcely any one else would have thought of beginning to it before they had procured a better supply.

During the early part of the severe storm, which commenced in January 1838, while shut in from his ordinary labour, he busied himself in revising his part of the MS. of Lectures on Practical Economy, which had been now returned for that purpose, and in freeing it from that acrimony with which, from causes already noticed, some parts of it were imbued. To accomplish this, he wrote the greater part of it over a third time. But a blow was now impending which, for a season, wholly unfitted his mind for such labours. On the 4th of February, that father, for whose future comfort he had laboured so hard to provide, began to complain; and on the 8th of the same month he died. This was the first bereavement of the kind which had occurred in the family since he was a member of it, and, as such, it was more severely felt. All those pictures of comfort, for that parent in the evening of life, which his benevolent heart had delighted to paint, were at once and for ever annihilated; and, for a time, it seemed as if existence had lost its principal charm. But as he had no neglected duties with which to accuse himself, though his cheerfulness did not so soon

return, by degrees he acquired that composure of mind which enabled him to complete his task, and some time in March the MS. of the Lectures was again returned to Edinburgh.

About this time a literary and scientific gentleman, to whom these Lectures had been submitted for the purpose of ascertaining the soundness of their principles, generously offered to use all his influence with some friends in Parliament, to procure for him a government situation. But this—while he felt deeply the obligation which he was under to those who interested themselves in his future fortune—he declined, determining to try to the last what he could do for himself and his remaining friends by his own unaided industry. I am glad to be able to state this circumstance, which was never known beyond the family circle, and to feel conscious of the most perfect ability to prove its truth, because it serves to show, in a more striking light, the manner in which he could abide by those stern principles of independence which he had adopted, even in the midst of pinching poverty. Though a small sum of money had been saved from his earnings during the early part of winter, the whole had been required to defray the expense of his father's funeral; and at the time at which this offer was made to him he was literally pennyless, prevented from earning any thing by the deep snow with which the earth was then covered, and, to avoid incurring debts, living upon oatmeal and potatoes,

without any addition whatever—not even that of milk. His fare, even when in moderately prosperous circumstances, had all along been the simplest and the cheapest that could possibly be imagined; and upon it he continued to toil from day to day, and year to year, without trying to obtain, or seeming to desire, more. "But what," some reader may perhaps be inclined to ask—"what availed all this parsimony and care? Lived he not as poor and neglected as others live? and died he not even earlier than most others die?" The truth of these questions I cannot controvert; but still I answer that to him it was much. In the circumstances in which Providence had placed him, had he been solicitous about those comforts which many seem to consider indispensable, he must have been occasionally indebted to others for a part either of his own subsistence, or that of those relatives for whom he considered it his duty to provide; and this, to his spirit, would have been worse than gall and wormwood. But by the plan which he had adopted, he was enabled to "owe no man any thing save love," and, in general, had something to spare from his scanty earnings to relieve the wants of those who were still poorer than himself.

During the summer of 1838, in the midst of drudgery scarcely less severe than that he had been subjected to on the previous one, he contrived to write two stories, which were actually printed from the first sketch. For the copyright

of these he afterwards received six guineas; and had it not been for this, hard as his fare was, it must have been still harder. The publication of the Tales and Sketches had produced some offers of employment from the conductors of periodicals. In November of the same year we had the prospect of obtaining about £36 per annum by writing: it was only the prospect, however; for, as it turned out, little more than half that sum was ever realized. With this in view, he now felt inclined to drop manual labour, and try if, by devoting the whole of his attention to literature, other connections could not be obtained. Even though nothing else should come in the way, he felt confident that upon such a sum the family could live with comfort, and save something from it for those improvements which were still wanted. The time not required for writing could be employed in enclosing and cutting out rock from some portions of the garden, &c.; and thus, at Martinmas 1838, he gave up the whole of his engagements, and determined, if possible, to trust to his pen in future for his support.

In taking this step, his friends were not without some apprehensions for his health; but, what was rather a curious circumstance, from the time at which he had come to his present habitation, or rather from the time at which he came to work in that quarter, notwithstanding the severe drudgery to which he was subjected, a marked improvement

in his constitution had taken place; and for the last sixteen months he had enjoyed better health than he had done for seven years before. The elevated situation, and free, dry air of the place, which seem to have been instrumental in producing this change, gave him a sort of confidence in his ability to resist the effects of confinement; and when an acquaintance spoke to him of the evils likely to result from want of exercise, he said that "if his stomach was less excited by labour, he intended to diminish his diet, which would give it, in proportion, less work to perform." This plan, in spite of the remonstrances of his friends, he adopted; and it was perhaps one of those errors the future effects of which mortals cannot foresee at the time they are committed.

In the course of the first month he had produced two stories, for the copyright of which he afterwards received six guineas. The whole of these were written twice, and some parts of them, which displeased him, three times over: so that, besides the time spent in contriving the plan, and arranging the incidents, the amount of writing which he performed was not inconsiderable. While thus employed, he was seldom absent from his papers for a single minute. From a want of proper accommodation, he still adhered to his old custom of writing upon his knee. To this he had been so long habituated, that he had almost lost the power of writing with facility in any other posi-

tion; but of the exhausting and destructive tendency of that he had adopted, any one may be convinced who will try it for a single day.

His next attempt was a story for one of the magazines; and upon this, though it was not, perhaps, one of his happiest efforts, he had bestowed the very greatest care. I was then engaged in a similar attempt; and, while writing, he repeatedly asked me if "I was straining up the steep of excellence?" and said that "he was endeavouring to do so, by analyzing carefully every sentence which he wrote, to see that there was not a single superfluous or inappropriate word in it." He also frequently advised me to bestow more consideration on the subjects with which I was concerned, and try to finish them in the best possible style. On these occasions he always stated, as his reason for giving such advice, that "in our circumstances, a week, or even a fortnight, of additional time was nothing, if we could only procure an engagement, and the prospect of being able to dispose of future productions." This story, after undergoing considerable alterations, and being greatly abridged at the suggestion of a literary friend, was accepted in the quarter for which it was intended; but, from the circumstance of nothing being given for MS. till it appears in print, it still remains unpaid (April 1840); and with its acceptance, the sun of prosperity, which had merely glanced upon its poor author, set to rise no more upon him.

For nearly a year previous to this time he had acted as secretary to the Newburgh Temperance Society. On the evening of the 28th of January 1839, he had sat for two or three hours in a room strongly heated with a stove, attending to their business; the night was one of intense cold; in his eagerness to succeed as a writer, for months previous he had scarcely passed the threshold of his own dwelling, and he was thus prepared in more ways than one to suffer from the severity of the weather. On coming out to the open air, he immediately felt a tendency to shivering; he had two miles to walk, and before he reached home he had caught that fatal cold which paved the way for his dismission from this world. Some mornings after, he complained that his head had been so confused during the night, that he scarcely knew in which corner of the house he was lying. The feverishness thus produced, together with the scanty diet to which he had confined himself for some time past, rendered repeated doses of medicine indispensable. These soon destroyed the tone of his stomach, and early in February* he found himself once more suffering from dyspepsy, accompanied by the dry

* About this period, as he did not consider himself adequate to the task of writing a last copy of the story with which he was then engaged, for nearly a week he endeavoured to amuse himself by composing verses upon various subjects. "The Drunkard's Home," "The Drunkard's Bliss," "The Drunkard's Wife," a "Marriage Hymn," and two "Temperance Hymns," are a few of the things which he produced

hard cough formerly noticed. Before the middle of the month, he said, "He doubted he must change his mode of living, by trying to take more victuals, and more exercise in the open air." From this time forward, when the weather was fair, the half, and occasionally the whole, of the day was devoted to cutting out rock from some portions of the garden which had been left untouched the previous year, providing stones for a garden-dike, digging, &c. He also began to rise early in the morning, and, with the first appearance of dawn, went forth to take a walk of some length along a rocky ridge which rises on the south side of the house.

To make up for the time thus spent, he was in the habit of busying himself with his papers till late at night. By this means, some other stories

during this interval. Though he was suffering from a degree of feverishness which made close application painful, or rather impossible, his imagination was uncommonly active; and besides the above, in a single day, so far as I recollect, he had contrived the plot, and slightly sketched the leading incidents of three stories. These papers he tied up separately in the evening, to be kept for a future demand; and they are still lying as he left them, labelled respectively, "Plan of the Persecuted Pastor," "Plan of the Village Merchant," and "Duncan Tippenny's Cow." There is also another, entitled, "The Plan of the Feud," which, from being sketched at greater length, is almost a story in its present shape. The whole of these were intended as memoranda; and had he lived, he could have easily extended each of them into a tale of considerable length.

were completed and sent off, about the first of April; but, as already said, success had now forsaken him, and they were returned, with an editor's "sentence of death" passed upon them. His perseverance, however, was still unbroken. By close application, in the course of the following week he had produced another story, which was again despatched with as little loss of time as possible; but this, instead of brightening his prospects, elicited an intimation, that no farther contributions could be received for at least three months to come. To be thus, as it were, thrown out of employment, must always be in itself sufficiently galling: but to him it was more so, from a knowledge that he had now cast his bread upon these uncertain waters; and the doubt which existed as to his being again able to find suitable labour, even though he should stoop so low as, in the words of Burns, to "beg a brother of the earth to give him leave to toil."

Notwithstanding these disappointments, he appeared to be recovering. The cough was now nearly gone, and his complexion, which previously had been very pale, once more assumed a healthier colour. On the first Sabbath of May he was at church; and the same week, in writing to his aunt, he says, "my brother and myself are quite well." The disease in his stomach, however, still continued; nor had any of the simple changes of diet which he tried the slightest effect in mitigating it.

On the 8th of the month, a letter from Edinburgh, which announced the publication of Lectures on Practical Economy, informed him that the work was no favourite with the trade—not one of the booksellers in the metropolis having subscribed for a single copy—and that it was not likely to sell in haste. This was a still deeper disappointment. From the originality of the design, and the circumstance of its being intended to teach people what they might do for themselves —which, by the way, is always a foolish, and often a dangerous attempt—he had entertained sanguine expectations of the success of the work. These expectations were now blasted by a single withering sentence; from which, though it was written by a friend, and couched in the most friendly terms, he at once saw the truth. The copyright, moreover, had been sold upon the principle, that the authors were only to be rewarded for their trouble, if an edition consisting of a specified number of copies could be disposed of. Of such a result there was no appearance; and while the publisher might be a considerable loser, it appeared to him that the whole of the research, anxious thought, time, and labour, which had been devoted to maturing the work, were no better than thrown away—a reflection by no means comforting to any one, and still less so to the subject of this sketch, who was then suffering from the attacks of disease, and at the same time struggling with the world. Had he been in his ordinary

health, no one knew better how to bear such disappointments, or how to forget them in his endeavours to succeed in some other way. In ordinary circumstances, they might have served for a jest, as things of the same kind had done before. But it is a well-known symptom of dyspepsy, that the patient is almost always inclined to take gloomy views of his present state and future prospects; under this disease he had been labouring from the middle of February: his life might be said to be now in the balance, and these events certainly were not without their share in turning the scale towards the fatal result which followed. To his own feelings under these circumstances he gave vent in the following verses, which were written shortly after the arrival of the letter from Edinburgh.

REJOICE.

I.

Rejoice! and why?—To know my span
  Is wasting fast away
In labours for the good of man,
  Which men with sneers repay.
To know that I am poor, yet feel
  My heart with pride beat high—
With a stern pride which scorns to kneel
  To base indignity.

II.

Rejoice! and why?—To live unseen,
  An object of neglect,
And see the vain, the vile, the mean,
  Surrounded with respect:

To be in life's loud bustle lost,
And look on creeping things,
With nothing but their wealth to boast,
Worshipp'd as lords and kings.

III.

Rejoice! and why?—To see my hopes
All wither'd, one by one;
To feel my life's last treacherous props
Fall broken and undone:
To sink into a timeless grave,
And feel that I was born,
And lived, and toiled, for nothing, save
To suffer and to mourn.

IV.

Rejoice! and why?—To know my name
Is doomed to be forgot;
To struggle hard for honest fame,
And yet to find it not!
To know that few remain to shed
A tear-drop where I sleep;
To rot amid the nameless dead—
Rejoice! No; let me weep!

These melancholy verses may perhaps serve as a quietus to the spirit of literary adventure. In the case of their poor author they were distressingly verified; and it is to be feared that "timeless graves," and space "to rot amid the nameless dead," is the fate of too many of those who, like him, sacrifice their health and happiness in the hope of being able to wring a precarious subsistence from writing. He, however, did not "weep," as he asks leave to do in the last line. Indeed,

tears for his own sufferings, whatever they might be, had all along been strangers to his eyes: but his fate was now fast approaching.

On the morning of the 11th or 12th of May, he lay longer in bed than usual; and when he had nearly dressed himself, as he passed his hand across his brow, "I could wager," he said, "that I have caught the influenza, or something else; for I have a sore head, and I feel such a degree of weariness that I can scarcely think of moving." The pain in his head soon abated, the weariness wore off by degrees, and then he continued to rise as early as before, take his accustomed walk, prepare his simple breakfast of porridge, and employ himself in the open air for a part of the day; but from that time forward the cough began to increase, and his strength to diminish. He was urged repeatedly to take medical advice; but his common answer was, that "he did not know what a doctor could do for him, and that he would not regard the cough if he could only keep his stomach in repair."

Though his prospect of being able to dispose of such productions was now greatly diminished, he was eager to the very last of his ability to provide for himself, and assist in providing for his remaining parent; and between this and the end of the month he had written upon such pieces of waste paper as came to hand, a story called "The Rivals of Bankhumburn," which would form no inconsiderable part of a volume. It is still lying,

as he left it, in manuscript: the style is correct, and it requires nothing but to be copied on good paper. He, however, did not then consider himself adequate to the task of writing a press-copy, upon which he always bestowed the closest attention; and that he might not be idle, he had begun another, entitled "Sandy Samfort's Will." Of this he had written six or seven pages, when, on the forenoon of the 5th of June, he turned round to me and said, with a faint smile, "Do ye see, man, my head has got into such a state that I can neither think nor write." I bade him drop it immediately, and said it would be a hard world if I could not either work or write for both him and myself. For some days past his pulse had been getting high, with an unnatural heat on the surface of his body. He now laid aside his papers, and the day being too cold for venturing out, tried to amuse himself with a book between that and dinner-time. In the course of the afternoon, thinking himself a little better, he again resumed them, and continued to write till it was almost time to go to bed; and this was the last attempt at composition which he ever made. The last day of comparative health which Providence had allotted for him was now past—his "vigils of the night," and morning watches, were terminated—and those studies which he had pursued with a martyr's zeal were at an end.

On the morning of the 6th of June, while sitting by the fire which he had himself kindled for the

last time, he was seized with a fit of coughing, and expectorated some matter streaked with blood. He examined it calmly, to make certain of the circumstance; and shortly after the same alarming symptom was repeated. I was hurrying off to call a doctor, when he passed between me and the door, and said, "if medical advice were necessary, he was not so weak but that he could go and consult a doctor for himself, which would save some expense." He was now bled, and put under medical treatment, which for some days seemed to have very little effect. The cough, however, abated considerably: he expectorated no more bloody matter; and on Tuesday the 11th, he appeared to be rather better. Both before and after being bled, he had been affected with pains in the breast, side, and behind the shoulders, which, at times, nearly prevented him from breathing, and, as he afterwards stated, amounted almost to agony: these also had, in a great measure, disappeared. But on the following day, which was rather stormy, he tried to walk a little in the open air, and having, as was supposed, caught more cold, the whole of the bad symptoms returned in their very worst shape. Before night the cough was much harder, his pulse greatly increased, and by the time he went to bed, his breathing was so quick and laborious that it might have been heard on the outside of the house.

The whole of the particulars connected with that trying and painful scene are so deeply engraven

on my remembrance, that I could still narrate them almost as minutely and as faithfully as if they had occurred but yesterday. But as it is distressing to contemplate, under any shape, youth and vigour gradually sinking into the grave, I must pass on as quickly as possible to the closing scene of his brief career. And yet there is much in which, I fear, I shall trespass upon the reader's time; and much for which I must entreat his forbearance and pardon.

When I first saw him in the full light of day after the night on which he had been so ill, his look was so pale, his face so much altered by the disease, and, above all, his breathing so quick and laborious, that a fatal termination seemed to be at hand. Impressed with this idea, my lips refused to ask the usual question, how he was? and, for a time, I stood silent as a statue before him. He immediately appeared to guess the cause, and, making a strong effort to breathe easier, he took out his snuff-box, and, with a smile, said, "Come, man, and let us take a snuff together." How much of his character and the benevolence of his heart may be seen in this simple incident! Seven months have elapsed since the morning on which it occurred, but that look, and that smile, and the tones of his voice as he spoke these words, are even now fresh before me. I almost fancy I can see him still as he leaned gently forward on the chair for the purpose of offering me his snuff-box; and though I stood beside him, and heard

the last sigh which heaved his bosom, and saw the last breath pass from his pale lips; and though I know that his mortal part has, ere now, feasted the worm, and that I shall never, never see him again upon earth, at this moment, I could almost stop writing to listen for those cheering accents with which, when he supposed I was dejected, he was wont to salute me.

About the 20th of the month, he was so weak that his legs shook under him as he tried to walk between the bed and his chair by the fire. Lack of strength, and the state of the weather, which was cold and cloudy, now induced him to confine himself wholly to the house; and under this regulation, he seemed, by slow degrees, to get a little better. One morning, when Mrs Ferguson, a neighbour who had all along taken a deep interest in his case, came to inquire for him, she found him busied in preparing his own simple breakfast, a thing which he always wished to do till within two days of his death; and after answering her questions, and desiring her to take a seat, "I have known some people," he said, "who thought that man might direct himself, and discover what was best for him by the light of reason, and that there was no occasion whatever for the interference of an especial Providence; but I, at least, have good reason to doubt the correctness of these notions; for, but a short time ago, I believed that I could not live a single fortnight if I were confined to the house—this was my firm conviction, drawn from

former experience, and the light of reason; but now, Providence, by sending cold weather, has seen meet to confine me for eight or ten days; and though it has been against my will, I believe it has been for my advantage; for the cough is, upon the whole, easier, and I really think I am rather better." These words were spoken in a tone of cheerful gratitude, as if his heart had been overflowing with thankfulness to God for the slight relief which he had just begun to experience. Since the time at which he was bled, he had been able to read very little, but he still kept a small pocket Bible lying in his easy chair behind him, and when no one was reading or speaking to him, it was his custom to take it up and read a Psalm or a Paraphrase, which was, in general, as much as he could do without suffering from an increase of feverishness.

Though the disease had now abated somewhat of its malignity, and he was again allowed to walk out a little, he does not seem ever to have entertained very sanguine hopes of his recovery; for, one day when an acquaintance found him sitting in a sheltered situation, with his Bible in his hand, and noticed the circumstance, "Whatever the event may be," said he, "it is best to be prepared for the worst," and, with these words, for the time, he dismissed the subject. Accustomed to say but little of his own concerns to others, with him, preparation for death had become a work of the

heart, with which the lips had comparatively little to do.

At this time there was one circumstance which never failed to make a strong impression upon my own heart; and, though of little importance, the reader will perhaps pardon me for noticing it. The window of the apartment in which we always sat looked directly to the north; and when the sun had nearly finished his daily journey, as he was about to set behind the hills far to the north-west, his horizontal rays, passing obliquely through the glass, shed a flood of pale yellow light which gave a peculiar appearance to the objects on which it rested. As regularly as evening came, if the northern sky chanced to be unclouded, this light fell full upon his pale and placid cheek, as he sat by the fire, with his face half turned away from the window; and to my eye, the reflected radiance, as it died away, fainter and fainter, upon those parts of his countenance which were partially thrown into shade, gave him an appearance and an expression of serenity, which seemed to savour more of other worlds than of this. The whole, as a matter of course, was the effect of fancy; but it served to imprint more deeply on at least one heart the distressing apprehension that, notwithstanding appearances, and in spite of all we could do to save him, his days on earth were already numbered, and he was fast hastening from his friends, and from time, to that world of spirits whence none can return.

On Saturday the 6th of July, by the advice of his medical attendant, who had all along been very attentive, we set off for Blairgowrie—a place situated on the north side of Strathmore, near the base of the Grampians; and, by the route we followed, lying at a distance of thirty-five or thirty-six miles. He stood the fatigue of the journey, which was accomplished by the steam-boat and railroad, better than had been anticipated; and during a few good days which, on the first week of his residence there, he was permitted to enjoy, his strength seemed to improve a little. "What a blessed day," he would say occasionally; "and how kindly Providence has dealt with us!" On one of these days, between morning and evening, he had walked about seven miles: this was a great deal more than he had ever been able to perform since he was taken seriously ill; and had the Supreme Disposer of Events seen meet to favour him with a track of genial weather, it would almost appear that he might have, even yet, recovered. But cold easterly winds, and heavy rains, immediately followed, and his health and strength again began to decline.

Having one morning bought worsted gloves, and a pair of thick stockings for him, when I put them into his hands, "You have been throwing away money," said he, "for things of which I do not feel the want; and it would have been much wiser to have kept it for some useful purpose at home, where, to a certainty, money must now be

scarce.' After a short silence, as he laid the things on a table which stood at hand, "They are good-looking articles after all," he added; "and they may be of use to some one, whether I should live to wear them or not." This, till within two days of his last, was, with one exception, the only hint he ever gave of his own suspicions as to his approaching fate.

From the middle to the end of the second week, the weather was little else than a continuation of heavy rains, and cold easterly gales. He got quite sick of being confined to a room among strangers. Home had ever been the centre of his sympathies, and the scene of his few earthly enjoyments, and to it he now expressed a wish to return. "If people were constantly confined to the house," he said, "they could derive little advantage from any change of situation; and besides, he could live both cheaper and more comfortably among his friends; and with the first appearance of good weather we might come back." This resolution was adopted; and on the evening of Saturday the 20th, after encountering a number of adverse circumstances, the whole of which he bore with the greatest patience, he had again the pleasure of taking his accustomed seat by the fire in his own habitation.

For some days after his arrival, the consciousness of being among his friends, while it produced a cheering effect upon his spirits, seemed also to operate favourably upon his health. But the

cough, though not violent, still continued, his appetite and digestion remained feeble, his strength did not increase, and his pulse was scarcely ever below eighty. In the midst of weakness, however, he still retained his former equanimity of mind, and no inconsiderable share of his former cheerfulness. On his days of fancied convalescence, he was ever ready to rise from his seat to welcome such visiters as came to inquire for him. On these occasions, after thanking them with his usual suavity of manner, his common reply was, "I think I am rather better;" or, "I am no worse;" or, "I think I am getting a little strength slowly; but it is so slow that I cannot reckon the degrees." After having been confined for a length of time by bad weather, he would occasionally say, "I had lost strength yesterday and the day before; but I think I am a little stouter again to-day." These were his answers till within a fortnight of his death; and up to that period, though he might be weaker for a day or two, he did not appear to lose much strength.

People can rarely resign all hopes of life for those to whom they are warmly attached. The "good weather" with which he expected to return to Blairgowrie never came; and, as a less hazardous experiment, Monimail, a small village about four or five miles to the eastward, had been sometimes spoken of. From being completely sheltered by plantations and high grounds, it was considered as a place likely to be favourable for his com-

plaint, and to it he was accordingly conveyed on Friday the 2d of August—not without some expectations that the warmth of the situation, aided by medicines and proper care, might still enable him to get clear of the cough, which he now began to consider as the worst symptom. During the first part of his residence there, stronger hopes of his recovery were again excited by some journeys to the hills which he was able to perform; but this, alas! was only a characteristic of the disease, which, by the time alluded to, might be regarded as confirmed consumption.

On the night of the 14th of August he was lying on a couch, which, at his own suggestion, had been spread for him before the fire. To this he had been led by a recollection of the benefit he derived from the same plan being adopted in a former illness. I sat at his head, as usual, that I might be in readiness to use means for checking the night-sweats to which he was now liable. On this particular night the cough kept him from sleeping for a considerable time, and after he did sleep, the hectic, from which he was then suffering, prevented his sleep from being at all refreshing. He moaned with almost every breath, and frequently tried to speak, without being able fully to articulate the words. The middle of the night had passed; the sweat at last broke over his whole body, and, by relieving the overloaded vessels, seemed to relax the fever. On this occasion it had been checked in time, his breathing had become

easier, and he appeared to be sleeping tranquilly, when he was awaked by a slight cough. Almost in the same instant he turned his eyes on me with one of the brightest smiles I had ever seen on his countenance, and spoke some words, of which I could not then understand the meaning. But on the following morning, he told me that they were occasioned by "some fine opium dreams which he had in the course of the night. By some process," he said, "which appeared perfectly simple at the time, though he could not now describe it, he thought he saw the absorbent vessels in his lungs, stimulated by the iodine,* drinking up the noxious matter which choked the air passages, and impeded his respiration. So powerful was the effect, that it seemed as if it had been rapidly invigorating and restoring him to perfect health; and so delightful was the sensation which he then experienced, that he was afterwards loth to think it was only a dream." Such was the account which he gave of these illusions of the night; but, instead of endeavouring to draw favourable omens from them, as some people would have certainly done, he said immediately after, that "the whole was owing to the abatement of the fever, and the pleasant feeling produced by his being allowed to enjoy a short season of peaceful slumber.

* Previous to this, an ointment prepared from *iodine* had been applied to his breast and back, till the outer skin had almost wholly come off.

On the 16th or 17th of the month, he began to complain of a sort of oppression of the chest, as if there had not been room to get in a sufficient quantity of air; and an inclination, upon making the slightest exertion, to relieve himself by trying to draw a long breath. A day or two after, he said, "he never had a cough like this before," and expressed a fear that "if it should continue till the cold weather came on, it would grow worse." He then mentioned the names of some of his former acquaintances who had been affected with a cough and weakness, in consequence of having caught bad colds; and who, "like him," he said, "had hung on for a time without being either much better or much worse, and then dropped off as the season advanced. This," he continued, "may very probably be the case with me." While he thus wished to prepare his few friends for the worst, lest his death should come upon them by surprise, he was willing to use all the means pointed out for his recovery; to swallow the bitterest medicines without murmur or complaint; and, in short, to do anything which might have a tendency to prolong his existence.

It was now supposed that the freer air around his home might still be serviceable to his breathing; and after waiting some days for one on which it would be safe to travel, on Wednesday the 21st of August, he got into a cart, and commenced his journey. The road, which passes through a part of the village of Collessie, brought him once more

among scenes with which he had been familiar when, as he has himself expressed it, "a thoughtless boy"—that is, when in his apprenticeship; and of these, together with the years which he passed there, he spoke with a degree of feeling which seemed to say, I am bidding you farewell for ever! He afterwards made some observations on the short-sightedness of mortals, the fallaciousness of their prospects, and the unsatisfactory nature of all earthly enjoyments. But when not occupied with these solemn reflections, he was cheerful, and seemed to enjoy the motion of the cart, (which gave him exercise without fatiguing him,) the fineness of the day, and the stillness of the scene through which we passed. He also appeared to take an interest in the agricultural crops which were growing on each side of the road, and spoke frequently of their approximation to ripeness, and their luxuriance or scantiness, in a manner which showed that, in the midst of weakness and suffering, and even with death in view, he felt deeply for his poor countrymen, whose provisions were still at the mercy of a most precarious season.

On reaching home, he once more seemed to enjoy the associations of the place, and to feel happier there than he could be anywhere else. In the course of the afternoon—to try his small remains of strength, and even yet to make it useful, if possible—he attempted to dig a piece of ground for an autumn crop, which, on account of his

illness, had been previously neglected. While thus engaged, it was truly painful to see his slow and feeble motions, and to contrast them with the vigour and dexterity which only four months before he would have displayed at the same employment. When he had proceeded as far as his ability would go, he gave it up; but by this time his pulse was in such a flutter, that it was impossible to count it. On the Friday following he again tried digging for a short time, and this was the last effort of the kind he ever made. After suffering from a terrible night-sweat, which nothing could check or prevent, on the morning of Sabbath the 24th, his feet and ankles were considerably swelled, for the first time; and from this period he sunk almost perceptibly. On Monday and Tuesday his voice was so tremulous and altered, that even to me it sounded unaccountably strange; and his hand trembled so violently that he could scarce carry his victuals to his head; but still he continued to sit up and to move about at intervals. On Wednesday, the steadiness of his nerves seemed to be in some measure restored, but not his strength; and in the course of the forenoon he was abroad, for the last time, nearly three hours, in a cart.

On the morning of Thursday the 29th, he was evidently weaker, and his breathing more difficult. About the middle of the forenoon, the day being one on which he could not venture out, he was trying to walk through the room. I said I was glad to see him walk so stoutly, and warned him

not to fatigue himself with too much exertion. On being thus addressed, he stood still, looked me full in the face for nearly a minute, and then said, "He did not know he was so completely exhausted till I spoke, and he found that he could not answer me." When he had recovered breath, he said farther, "Though he had often complained of the weakness of his legs, he felt that they were not now the weakest part of his body." By this time his strength was nearly gone, and his feet and legs so much swelled, that he said "they felt heavy below the knee." After this he several times spoke of a wish to get up and walk; but he could not, he said, conquer his disinclination to move. In making these observations his tone was cheerful, and it seemed as if he wished to make it appear, that he still possessed a sufficiency of strength to enable him to walk, if he could only prevail upon himself to use it. Almost to the very last he seemed anxious to spare the feelings of those friends who he saw were deeply affected on his account.

Throughout the day he appeared eager to get to the open air, and inquired frequently if the weather was not yet clearing up? When it was late in the afternoon, the clouds dispersed a little, and the sun broke through, but a cold breeze still continued to blow. In these circumstances, being wholly at a loss how to answer his questions, I offered to assist him as far as the door, where he would have an opportunity of looking upon "the

fresh green fields," and be able to determine on the propriety of going out himself. To this he assented; and after leaning upon my arm for more than a minute in silence, during which time his eye seemed to traverse the plain below, the river, and the distant hills, when I asked him if he thought we might venture forth, he turned his gaze upon the ragged and broken clouds which still wore a stormy aspect, and as he surveyed them, "Oh no, no!" he said, with a degree of emotion in his voice which I had never before observed, "I see there is nothing for me now but to pine within the four walls of the house!" With these words he turned from the scene which he was destined never again to contemplate with the eyes of mortality; and I assisted him back to his chair, which, at his own request, had been moved round to the other side of the fire, where he could have such a view as the window would afford of the river, the adjoining Carse, and a part of the Sidlaw hills. Though he had never been one of those extravagant admirers of Nature, who can talk of little else, he felt perhaps even more keenly than they do, that indescribable communion which some spirits can hold with woods, waters, mountains, and the sky.

> "Oh, Nature! a' thy show and forms,
> To feeling kindly hearts have charms,"

was said by a poet of whom every peasant may well be proud: that this was the case with him, could easily be proved from portions of his con-

versation which are still remembered, and more fully from much that he has left behind him in writing. The few brief days of his existence had been passed for the most part in the open air, with an inland sheet of water spread out before him, the snows of winter, or the green fields of summer around him, and the sky above. For these, he had early contracted a sort of friendship; and up to the moment at which his sight began to fail, his eye seemed to rest upon those portions of natural scenery which he could behold from the window.

On the evening of the day last mentioned, when told of some people who had been anxiously enquiring for him, "I did not believe," he said, "that a thing so obscure could have interested so many hearts." On some former occasions, when shown the little things—such as jelly, fruit, &c.—which had been sent him, he said, oftener than once, "that he could not have imagined there was so much benevolence in the world." Shortly after he had made the touching allusion to "pining within the four walls of the house," when I asked him if I should read to him, or if there was anything else which I could possibly do to amuse him, "Go," said he, with a smile, "go and write a letter to Mr ——," naming a gentleman in Edinburgh, "you should have done this some time ago; and it is now of ten times more importance than reading, or trying to amuse me." To the very last, he seemed to consider himself an object of secondary importance; and wished no work to be neglected.

and no duty left unperformed, on his account. As bed-time drew on, he appeared to be growing worse, but still he tried, at intervals, to dissipate those fears which he saw accumulating in the looks of his friends, by an effort at conversation; and when laid down upon that couch, by the fire, from which he never arose, he said, with a smile, "I feel quite comfortable now."

In the course of the night, he slept a good deal, and moaned less in his sleep than he had done for some nights past. He, however, frequently attempted to speak; and sometimes, between sleeping and waking, spoke incoherently. At about four o'clock on the morning of Friday the 30th of August, he awoke, and inquired where he was; and shortly after added, "But how did we come to get to this quarter of the world?" My own feelings, at seeing his clear and comprehensive mind thus wander for the first time, when fully awake, need not be described. I laid my hand caressingly upon his shoulder—said he was at home, at his own fireside, and that his only brother was beside him. On being thus addressed, he immediately recognised me, seemed to recover his recollection at once, and, after a short pause, said, "I am failing fast; I feel that every part of my body is failing fast!" I then mentioned the 26th verse of the lxxiii Psalm, which he had himself formerly spoken of as one laid hold on by an acquaintance in his last moments:

My heart and flesh doth faint and fail,
But God doth fail me never, &c.

"Yes," was his reply: he seemed to grasp at the sentiment contained in the verse, and shortly after said, "We should endeavour to keep the merits of the Saviour always in our eye;" and then added, "I have been entreating mercy for a poor sinful soul!" I tried to encourage him, by saying that none who came to Him for mercy, with their whole hearts, were ever rejected. "No!" said he emphatically. He then quoted a number of promises, such as,—"Seek and ye shall find, ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you." "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "Come buy wine and milk without money and without price," &c. After having quoted these, and some other passages of Scripture, now forgotten, "I hope," said he, "soon to join my father, and my grandmother, and other friends whom I have never seen on earth, in a happier world than this." While he thus spake, he was so weak, and his respiration so difficult, that he had to pause for breath at almost every second word. About six o'clock the same morning, after having sipped a little wine mixed with water, which was the first he had tasted for many years, he spoke with firmness and composure of his approaching dissolution. Besides much which cannot be remembered, "You must not be cast down," he said, "though I am about to be taken away; nor sorrow as those who have no hope." He then called for his mother,

said he had seen but little of her for some days—she having been for the most part employed in the other room—bade her sit down beside him, and tried to comfort and soothe her feelings as far as his own weakness would permit. This duty performed, he next spoke of his funeral. "Now," said he, "with respect to my coffin, I would wish it to be of the very plainest kind which can possibly be procured, and to have no unnecessary expense incurred." Strange wish indeed! Some have busied themselves, while living, in building monuments to their own memory; but he could forget himself, even in death, in his care for the comfort of those he was about to leave behind him. In the course of the same morning, "I am perfectly resigned to leave the world," he said: "My only sorrow is for the debts and expenses which have been incurred on my account: and I regret nothing save leaving my few friends to struggle in a world of disappointment, toil, and difficulty, without being able to lend them my assistance."

At eight o'clock his pulse and breathing were so low, that I never expected to see him open his eyes, or hear him speak more; but a few minutes after he said composedly, "The pale horse comes slower than I had expected." In the course of the next half-hour, he revived a little, spoke some words with tolerable strength, said, "he felt no pain at present, but he could not expect to be permitted to leave the world without a struggle;" and in twenty

minutes more he was so far revived as to be able to sit up on the couch and take a few spoonfuls of his usual breakfast—porridge and milk—with his own hands.

Oftener than once, in the course of the morning and forenoon, he expressed a wish to be removed from the couch on which he lay before the fire, and put into the bed, that "he might die where his father died!" but he always concluded by saying, that "he believed this was only a whim after all:" and when the risk of moving him in his weak state was represented, he appeared perfectly satisfied to remain where he was.

Toward noon, his face, which formerly had been pale and wasted, became flushed and full—every symptom of emaciation was, for the time, gone; a pure red was on his cheek and lips, his eye was full and bright, and he appeared as robust and beautiful—if I may be pardoned the expression—as ever he had done in his best days. When this circumstance was noticed to him, he looked at his face in a small mirror, and said, "it was only a symptom of the disease"—meaning consumption.

At half-past six in the evening he said, "As time was lengthened out to him, he should like to shake hands once more with his friends." He then bade a most affecting farewell to those around him; first to Mrs Ferguson,* who chanced to be

* A widow living in the nearest house, for whose attention, kindness, and sympathy, during his illness, he had always expressed the warmest gratitude.

nearest, then to myself, his mother and aunts, individually bestowing his blessing upon each. When he had shaken hands with the last, "May the Lord bless you all!" he said, "and guide you in all your wanderings through this wearisome and thorny world; and may he grant us a meeting in that happy country where there shall be no more sin and no more sorrow—where the inhabitants shall no more say I am sick, neither shall they hunger or thirst any more, and partings shall be unknown."

About five o'clock on the morning of Saturday the 31st, he said, "I am longing to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better:" and shortly after he prayed, as nearly as can be recollected, in the following words:—"Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and receive my sinful soul. Thou hast said that those who come unto Thee thou wilt in nowise cast out. I come unto Thee now. Draw me unto Thee with thine own strength; for I am, as thou knowest, a poor weak sinful creature."

When his little breakfast was brought, he implored a blessing on it in words nearly as follows: "O Lord! in the midst of deserved wrath, I beseech thee to look down upon me in mercy. Give me the sanctified use of those blessings which I am about to receive at thy hand, and, if it can consist with thy holy will, make them the means of raising me up to health again: with thee all things are possible. Yet not my will, but thy

will be done," &c. Though he was willing to depart, and knew that a rest and a joy unspeakable awaited him above—so long as there was a bare possibility of his recovering, and even after such a possibility had ceased to exist—if such had been the Lord's will concerning him, he was also willing to recover and to live, in the midst of disappointment and suffering, to save his friends from the pang of separation.

The slight exertion which was necessary to take his breakfast brought on sickness and diseased action of the nerves: he was laid down immediately, and for the next half hour he continued to breathe with great difficulty, while the unnatural energy of the muscles connected with the lower jaw, made him grind his teeth as if he would have crushed them to atoms every moment—indeed I expected to see the fragments falling from his mouth with almost every motion. During this period of extreme suffering, when the violence of the fit permitted, he was frequently heard to supplicate mercy for himself, and a speedy dismission, in broken sentences; and when it subsided, he said, "This has been a hard, hard struggle! and to no purpose!" While the nervous fit lasted, he oftener than once exclaimed, "Oh is it not near? the hour when I may expect to be gone!" When he had recovered a little, he again enquired eagerly as to the state of his pulse, bade Mrs Ferguson place his finger upon it, and when, either from a slight degree of swelling in one of his hands, or

from the nerves of sensation failing to perform their functions, he could not perceive it, he asked, "If it were not yet sinking?" and said several times, "Oh is the hour not yet arrived when it shall cease to flutter?"

At half-past eight the same morning he was nearly suffocated with the expectoration, and could with difficulty be prevailed upon to take a few tea-spoonfuls of milk, saying that "it would again revive him, and produce a struggle as violent as that which was past." Shortly after, when one of his friends proposed giving him something more, he said, "That would not be the speediest way of bringing on my dissolution:" and then repeated that verse of the 23d Psalm, which begins, "Yea, though I walk through death's dark vale," &c.

Some time after, when he awaked from a short sleep, he repeated from the 8th to the 11th verse of the 84th Psalm; and then said, "If I had the wings of a dove I would flee away and be at rest." Toward noon, when asked to take some nourishment, his reply was, "Oh no, no! I feel no inclination for any thing: I hope soon to be beyond those habitations in which meat and drink are necessary, and to arrive in that happy country where they shall neither hunger nor thirst any more, and where the inhabitants shall no more say I am sick." This was the second time he had repeated these words from the Revelations. When asked how he liked a new arrangement of the bed-

clothes, he replied, "If it would hasten on the hour

> ——— 'when I shall take my flight
> To realms of pure and more celestial light,'

I should be glad." He then inquired eagerly at those around him, "If they thought he would be allowed to make his escape from the body on the following night?"

In the course of the same forenoon, when recovering from one of those qualms in which it was believed he would have breathed his last, he said, "I thought I was gone: but it is false—it is false!" and then he repeated that verse of the 32d Paraphrase which begins, "God is the treasure of my soul," &c. At another time he said, "Lord, purify me from all corruption, and elevate my thoughts to a pitch only known in the New Jerusalem." He also seemed to fix upon that passage (Job xix. 25,) wherein the inspired writer says, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand upon the earth at the latter day; and though, after my skin, worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Some time about noon, when asked if he still felt the same assurance, he said he did, but that he was not able to speak much. I then said, that though speaking might fatigue him, I hoped he was still able to keep his thoughts fixed upon the things of another world. "Yes," was his reply; I can still think composedly, though I know not how long I may be able either to speak or think;

but I have placed my confidence upon the Rock of Ages—I have committed my soul into the hands of the Saviour, and he will keep it though every faculty should fail."

About half an hour past noon he said, "I am surely near the borders"—but was unable, from weakness, to complete the sentence. Afterwards he exclaimed, in a feeble voice, "O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?" A little before three in the afternoon, he said, "Lord be merciful to my soul! Thou knowest my weakness—thou knowest that I am unable to entreat thee with many words; but I beseech thee to be merciful unto me!" He then enquired again as to the state of his pulse, and said, "He must endeavour to wait the Lord's time with patience."

However interesting the dying words of a near and dear friend may be to the mourners left behind, and however they may wish to dwell on them, I am well aware that some readers will have but little patience with such: in this respect I have perhaps already erred; and yet I have only quoted a few of those scanty specimens of his last sayings, which had been preserved in writing. I must now, however, hasten on to the last solemn event, noticing only the progress of the disease, and a few occurrences, in passing.

Some time about three in the afternoon he fell asleep, and slept calmly, for the most part, till it was nearly six in the evening. Up to this period his slumbers appeared to have been frequently

disturbed by dreams: he spoke often, and sometimes tried to speak without being able to articulate the words; but, with a very few exceptions, the moment he opened his eyes, he was as collected as ever he had been in his life, knew every one around him of whom he had the slightest acquaintance, and could speak as much to the purpose as if he had been in perfect health. The case, however, was now reversed: his sleep had been peaceful, and free from these wanderings of the imagination; but when he awoke his recollection seemed to have departed. "Where am I now?" he said. "I wish you would take me home, and try to get my head under a roof." He next spoke of "two machines for dragging people about the hills"—recollecting, perhaps, something of the difficulty with which he had himself clambered over the rocks, in his early excursions for health, and then added, "I have scarcely breath to enable me to take my dinner, and far less to be dragged about in this manner." When I took his hand in mine, laying my other gently on his forehead, and assured him that he was at home, and in the society of that brother who had accompanied him through all his wanderings, he appeared to be satisfied. But from that time, till within a few hours of his departure, his mind continued to waver at intervals. He sometimes spoke of errors in his regimen, of neglects in administering his medicines, which, it had once been supposed, would promote his recovery; and on

these occasions there was, to an acute ear, a slight degree of vacancy in his voice. While thus engaged, he sometimes stopped short, seemed to reflect for a moment, and then said, with a faint smile, "I daresay I have been speaking nonsense." After one of those efforts, he in general appeared to have his understanding as unclouded, and his memory as clear as ever, for a time.

During one of these intervals, about seven in the evening, a letter arrived, enclosing £2 as the price of some verses which he had formerly contributed to a religious periodical, and requesting farther contributions. With the expectation of longer life, this would have afforded a most cheering prospect; and had he been spared, with that unconquerable perseverance which he possessed, it can hardly be doubted that he would have succeeded in extending his literary connections, and establishing his character as an author. But before the letter reached him, he had done with the cares and concerns of time: when it was read, he only said, "Literary employment and literary rewards are now to me matters of no importance;" and with this brief observation, he dismissed the subject for ever.

Notwithstanding the occasional wanderings of his mind, he had been evidently acquiring strength in the course of the afternoon and evening: when he spoke, there was a degree of firmness in his voice, and his breathing was so much improved from what it had been for the last fortnight, that

even I, as a last refuge from my own feelings, had almost tried to deceive myself into the belief that, by something little less than a miracle, he would yet recover. In the course of the night, he several times enjoyed what appeared to be a refreshing sleep of some length; and oftener than once he wished to rise and try to put on his clothes. When persuaded of the impropriety of such a step, twice he requested to be set up on the couch. In both instances, he gave considerable assistance in raising himself,—seemed still to have some confidence in his own strength,—and, after having sat for a time, laid himself down again with very little help.

At half-past seven on the morning of Sabbath the 1st of September, he once more sat up, and expressed a wish to have his clothes put on, and to be allowed to resume his seat by the fire; but at the solicitation of his friends, he was satisfied with getting his feet to the floor, and sitting erect upon the couch, with part of the bed-clothes wrapped round him. At this time, it would have been next to impossible to resist the idea that he was really better; and what was rather remarkable, in the course of the preceding day and night, the swelling had entirely disappeared from his legs and feet. Behind such a mask, the king of terrors can sometimes conceal himself, cheating mortals into the belief that he is about to pass by, at the very moment when he is fitting the fatal arrow to the string.

When a small quantity of porridge and milk

was brought, he set the plate upon his own knee, and, with a hand which was perfectly steady, took his accustomed breakfast. He then drank what remained of the milk, and seemed to relish it greatly. But in a few minutes after his meal was finished, he began to complain of something like a trumpet sounding in his ears, and shortly after he nearly lost his hearing. Before this occurred, he had the full possession of all his faculties; and, without appearing to be at all elated with his apparent betterness, he was composed and cheerful. He did not speak of death, probably because he did not wish to damp the spirits of his friends, during that short interval of lighter feeling which they had been allowed to share; but neither did he make the most distant allusion to the possibility of his recovery.

Shortly after his hearing began to fail, it became painfully evident that his strength also was fast sinking. He was seized with violent pains in his side, breast, behind his shoulders, and, in short, around the whole of his chest; his voice became strangely altered, and he complained that he could not hear himself speaking. His lips, which for the last twenty-four hours had been full, florid, and dry, assumed a pale bluish colour, and began to effuse a thin watery fluid. The movements of his eye grew gradually dull and slow; a more deadly paleness began to settle on his countenance; his sight also began to fail, and it seemed that spectral illusions now flitted before him, for

on one occasion he spoke of a bird, inquired at those around him if they did not see it, and then said, "It is gone now." Still he was able to speak, and again he spoke of his approaching end with the most perfect composure.

Some minutes before ten, he said, as he had frequently done before, "Lord Jesus receive my soul!" Shortly after he inquired what had become of his friends; and mentioning me by name, asked "where I was?" For some time past I had been supporting him as he sat in a half-reclining posture; but when I placed myself between him and the window, and spoke, he said, "I see very indistinctly now, but I can still see you." When told, farther, that the rest of his friends were around him, he said, "I am glad to have them beside me in my last moments," and then closed his eyes again. When asked a little after if he suffered much, his reply was, "A good deal." But still he uttered neither moan nor complaint.

Between ten and eleven he revived somewhat, and seemed to recognize his friends again. His eye, now bereft of all its former vivacity, moved slowly around the room, as if taking a last and farewell look of the objects with which he had been so familiar, and those friends to whom he had been so warmly attached; and still, as it fell on another face, it paused for a few seconds, as though he had been trying, through those shadows which now obscured his vision, to make certain of the identity of the individual. He once more

took a tea-spoonful of wine and water, but refused milk, saying to those around him, that "it was of no use now, and that they need not trouble themselves about him, for he would go into the same fit again immediately." The truth of what he said was soon verified. This was the last effort of sinking nature. The only words he was afterwards able to articulate were, "Lord Jesus receive my soul!" and at five minutes before eleven on the forenoon of Sunday, the 1st of September, 1839, he breathed his last.

In the course of the last two days of his life he had occasionally expressed his fears for "the last struggle;" and several times he had inquired at those around him, concerning such of their acquaintances as had died of consumption, whether their death was easy or otherwise; but, after a number of "struggles," each of which seemed to be the concluding one, death came to him at last with scarcely a struggle at all. From the time at which his last words were uttered, his eyes remained for the most part closed; and his breathing became gradually fainter and fainter—at last it began to intermit, and then return after a short interval, as if the spirit were still loth to lose its hold. These alternations were repeated several times; and when the last breath had been feebly drawn, a slight contraction of the muscles of the face, which drew the corners of the mouth gently upward into something like a smile, immediately followed. In a few seconds the contending nerves relaxed—

his now lifeless countenance regained its wonted expression of settled composure, and his eyes opened wide, with the pupils dilated beyond their ordinary size, while the whole orbs seemed to glow with an almost preternatural brightness. Excited and agitated as I then was, I should have been inclined to doubt the accuracy of my own senses; but when I pointed out the circumstance to others, I found that their opinion exactly coincided with my own; and, therefore, whatever may have been the cause of this unwonted appearance—and I am satisfied that it was produced by some natural cause, it could not be wholly attributed to fancy.

For several hours after the spirit had fled, and indeed up to the latest moment at which it could be seen, the expression of the face was almost the very same as that which had characterized him while sleeping. The whole countenance seemed composed to rest. The eyelids were only half-closed, shewing the pupils and part of the surrounding orb from between their dark fringes; while the eyebrows appeared more prominently black, from the marble whiteness of the forehead above. The upper lip was slightly curved, so as to shew the fore teeth, which seemed to rest gently on the inner part of the lower one; and all appeared so tranquil and so fair, that but for the paleness of death immoveably fixed upon every feature, one might have almost watched to see the breath again move his lips, and heave his bosom.

In stature, he measured upwards of six feet three

inches;* but though rather slender, such were his proportions, that it never struck the beholder he was uncommonly tall till he was seen beside others, and then he appeared the head and part of the shoulders above ordinary men. His mein was erect, and his walk rapid, inasmuch as he could have travelled five miles an hour without any extraordinary effort. Of muscular strength, when he chose to exert himself, he possessed a greater share than his appearance seemed to indicate; but as he did not pride himself upon this quality, except in cases of necessity, it was never exhibited. His lips, without being thick, were full—the upper one slightly curved, with the continuation of the nostrils distinctly marked. His eyes were blue, rather large, and, when he was excited, very expressive. His forehead was erect, moderately high, and when compared with the rest of his face, rather broad. His complexion, for the most part, was pale; but in early life it had been a pure white and red; and for some time before his last illness came on, it was nearly the same, only darkened a little by long and uniform exposure to the sun and storm. His hair, which in infancy had been nearly white, during the latter years of his life was almost black—moderately thick, and hung straight down, except at his ears, where it inclined to curl.

* His coffin, which was the longest the wright had ever made, measured seven feet, and when his remains were placed in it there was no room to spare.

In look and manner, when not engaged in conversation, he was rather thoughtful, and this circumstance, perhaps, made some people imagine that he was several years older than he really was.

With respect to his character, though its leading features may be gathered from his life and writings, a few particulars remain to be stated. In his manners, he was simple and unaffected. In the family circle, or when among acquaintances of his own class, he possessed a ready command of language, and could always explain his meaning with the greatest clearness, yet he was frequently apt to appear embarrassed before strangers; and such was his diffidence, that on one occasion when urged to speak a few words to an audience, composed almost exclusively of working men, he frankly confessed that he would rather meet the whole assembly armed with sticks, than rise up to address them. Though his station was humble, he had a quick sense of what belonged to him as a man, and he was ever ready to exact civil treatment, or to leave these to their own meditation who ventured to offer any other. Through life, he studied to regulate his conduct in such a manner as that no one should be able, with justice, to fix a quarrel on him; and when insulted without a cause, he never stooped to seek a mean revenge, rather choosing to withdraw at once from all farther intercourse with the offending individual; and such was his bearing upon these occasions, that of those who had once given offence, very few

had either the ability or the inclination to do it a second time. That he was careful to perform the duties which he owed respectively to others, may be judged from the circumstance of his having passed seven years at Inchrye, under two different overseers, without being once reproved for negligence, or having the mortification of listening to a single angry word from his immediate employers. Had his circumstances suited his inclination, he would have been liberal: as it was, his natural feelings led him to keep his own personal expenditure within the very narrowest compass, that he might always have the means of dealing honourably; but from the circumstance of having been frequently cheated, before he died, he had become careful to ascertain the value of those articles which he required before he ventured to bargain for them. Notwithstanding what he has himself said in the verses entitled "Rejoice," the most perfect neglect never seemed to give him the smallest uneasiness; but those condescending notices, which some people have the art of bestowing in such a manner as to make the subject of them aware of the favour they confer while doing so, never failed to disgust him. His piety, as stated elsewhere, was unaffected and unostentatious. That he was not insensible to female beauty, may be gathered from some of his stories; but the particular circumstance in which he was placed forbade him to think of changing his condition in life; and his ideas of honour were not of that

compromising kind which admits of forming intimacies with the certainty that they must terminate in disappointment to at least one of the parties. He was patient of cold, hunger, and fatigue; and though apt soon to despair of those enterprises where the co-operation of others was necessary, where the whole depended upon himself he possessed almost unexampled perseverance. At times he could compose verses with great rapidity; and at others, to use his own words, he "wrung them from a head which was full only of emptiness." Though the struggles in which his whole life was passed made it natural for him to wish to better his circumstances by his abilities as a writer, he never pandered to vulgar prejudice for the purpose of obtaining popularity, and he frequently wrote from motives altogether apart from that of money-making. Indeed it almost appears that he would have written to give expression and form to those ideas with which his active mind was frequently crowded, even though he had been certain that he should never receive a farthing for his trouble. In his happier moments there was a gentle playfulness in his disposition, with which it was almost impossible not to join. Of his wit and humour, he has left proof, in "Love in a Barrel," and some other poetical effusions, which, from their being of a ludicrous kind, have been omitted in the present work; and that he did not lack a fund of cutting sarcasm may be seen in various fragments of a poem

entitled "The World," which he had begun, and again laid aside, several years before he died. If he had some minor faults—and who is without them?—they must have been known to others: to the little family of which he was a member, his character appeared almost without a flaw. The warmest affection to them, a deep feeling of sympathy for those who were in distress, and a wish to promote the happiness of all, were certainly among its elements; and, lest it should be supposed that an only brother has taken too favourable a view of it, I am glad in some measure to substantiate the foregoing imperfect sketch by two extracts from letters, which, through the kindness of their writers, I am at liberty to use. An acquaintance, belonging to the same humble station with the deceased, in addressing a neutral person, thus writes concerning him:—

"It was long before I could convince myself that he was really gone. I have stood by the death-bed of near and dear relations, and seen the last convulsive throe which heaved their bosoms—I have followed to their long homes, some youthful companions, snatched off in the very prime of existence; and since I left Scotland, I have seen some valued friends torn away by death without even a moment's warning—but never in my life did I experience such a shock as when I first heard that *he* was no more. Among the many I have met and been acquainted with, I never knew one whom I could have trusted more, or loved better. His was the heart which knew no deceit—the heart which forgot its own cares and sufferings in its anxiety to alleviate those of others; and, altogether, I am convinced that his character was the nearest to perfection which can possibly be in a

world where all are imperfect. His merits may never figure in the history of his country, and his name may never be transmitted to posterity as one of the favourites of fame and fortune. Over his narrow bed, no monument to his memory may arise in sculptured grandeur, but genuine worth, truth, and goodness, are equally valuable, in whatever sphere they are found; and his virtues will be long remembered, and his untimely fate long lamented, by all who knew him as I did."

The following is from a gentleman who had an opportunity of seeing the whole of his printed productions, as well as a number of those which are still in MS., and who was almost the only literary friend with whom he ever corresponded:—

"Edinburgh, Sept. 11, 1839.

* * * "Your long and unusual silence, coupled with the tenor of your last letter, gave rise to many misgivings in my own mind as to the state of my poor friend's health; but had these forebodings been doubly strong, they could not have fortified me against the pang which I felt on receiving so melancholy a confirmation of them. This is indeed a heavy and affecting bereavement, seeing that in all your concerns you leaned so affectionately upon one another, and pursued the same simple course with such singleness of heart. For me to attempt to offer you consolation under this grievous affliction, were utterly fruitless. I can only sympathize with you, and that sincerely, as one who knew much, if not all, of the rare and estimable character of him who has left us in the flower of his youth. All his worth and value to you, I cannot presume to know—but I know that his loss is irreparable, view his relationship in whatever light I may. Had he lived many years longer, he might have adorned that society which has so much reason to deplore the untimely loss of a young man of the highest promise. Having already done so much, and so young, what might he

not have done had he been spared! Well are we entitled to believe, that the spark of genius which could preserve its vitality, despite the obstructions of poverty and misfortune, might have one day kindled into a blaze, to enlighten his fellow-creatures. To have such a light extinguished thus early, is a calamity too painful even to contemplate. In him, I have to lament the loss of a steady and warm friend. When I look back upon the few years of our intercourse, I feel a kind of melancholy pride that such a man was my friend. In any correspondence I ever had—in any works I ever read—never did I find a more uniform and straightforward development of manly principles and amiable feelings, than in those which have flowed from his pen. That so much worth should be taken away thus early, is matter of deep regret. But there is consolation in reflecting that he is elsewhere reaping those rewards which his virtues failed to procure for him here," &c.

As a tribute to his memory of a different kind, and from an unknown hand, the reader will perhaps pardon the insertion of the following lines, which were left here some time ago, with no clue by which to discover their author, save the initials attached to them :—

" And is he gone, whose genius could impart
A kindred feeling to each Scottish heart?
Yes, he is gone! and o'er his hallow'd bier
Scotia may pour the sympathizing tear
For him—her chosen—her departed son,
Whose course was finish'd ere 'twas well begun—
Whose fancy gave a brighter charm to truth—
Whom death, unsparing, nipt while yet in youth!
Yes, let her weep above her fallen bard,
Whose melting strains shall never more be heard;
While Genius and fair Virtue, as they blend,
Must own that BETHUNE was a mutual friend.—J. B."

Such, kind reader, is the simple story of JOHN BETHUNE—of one who, while he lived, was scarcely known beyond his own immediate neighbourhood, and whose name—but for the present feeble effort to preserve it for a few years longer—must have soon been blotted out from the records of time. I would hope that the imperfect sketch which I have endeavoured to give of his life and character may not be altogether without its use; and however far I may be from wishing the fate of others, in point of hardship and suffering, to resemble that of my lamented brother, the best I can wish for every reader is, that "their latter end may be like his."

POEMS.

THE DESOLATED CITY.

The clash of the battle is o'er,
The thundering balista* hath ceased
Its ruining missiles to pour; [spire
For the wall is o'erthrown, and each turret and
Of the Temple is shatter'd, and blacken'd with fire:
But where is the warrior and priest?
And where are the young and the beautiful? where
The virgins who moved with the dorcus's tread;
Whose songs were so sweet, and whose smiles were so fair?
Alas! they are silent and dead!

And where is the city of towers—
The lovely, the rich, and the free—
The city of palaces, gardens, and bowers—
The mistress of monarchs and seers—where is she?
She gave to the mightiest and wisest their birth,
And fill'd with her glory the nations of earth:

* An engine for throwing stones, used by Titus at the siege of Jerusalem.—See "Artillery," *Penny Cyclopædia.*

But she sunk by the vengeance of God, and her
doom
Swoop'd down in the blood-crested eagles of Rome.
O'er the site of the temple and seat of the throne,
The ploughshare of scorn hath been driven,
And the salt of derision contemptuously sown*
To denote the displeasure of Heaven.
And there stands not a stone on her desolate street,
For the ritual of mock'ry is darkly complete.

Oh! how had the wisest of men,
Who whilom bequeathed her a pile,
On whose equal the bright sun shall never again
Look down from his throne with a smile—
Even he who fulfill'd the bequest of his sire,
With a splendour beyond the projector's desire—
Oh! how had he grieved had he look'd on her now,
With the paleness of ashes encrusting her brow!

But a wiser than Solomon wept to behold
That city, while yet in her glory she stood—
While glancing with brilliants, and gleaming in
gold,
With the eye of a God he foresaw and foretold
The doom which should quench them in blood.
He beheld in the womb of futurity swelling
That wrath which hath crush'd her to dust—
And left in her desolate precincts no dwelling
For the sons of the good and the just.

* The foundations of the city are said to have been ploughed up by the Romans, and sown with salt.

He foreknew all the pangs he should there undergo:
Yet with pity, which none but a Saviour could
He felt for and wept o'er his enemy's woe, [feel,
Lamenting the wounds they forbade him to heal,
And grieving to think that her glory should cease,
For rejecting her King and his message of peace.
How gaily she shone with her turreted wall,
As the Saviour approach'd to her gate,
While a sorcery voluptuous seem'd settled on all—
Every soul save his own was elate:
For the days of futurity, dismal and drear,
Were conceal'd from their sight, though the omens were near.

And how did they welcome a stranger so high?
Did the pharisee, rabbi, and priest,
With each other in courteous solicitude vie
To press him to come to the feast? [abode
Did they pour forth in haste from each splendid
To salute with devotion their King and their God?
Did they scatter with roses a path on the street,
Where the glorious Redeemer might tread?
Did they fall down and worship all low at his feet,
And crown with a diadem his head?

Were the valleys of Judah explored for his wreath?
And the flowers which in bloom were the fairest
Impress'd by the good in his garland, to breathe
Those perfumes around which were rarest?
Ah no! the salute he received was a blow;
He was hail'd with the hisses of scorn;

Every face which he met was the face of a foe,
And his crown was a chaplet of thorn.

In the mock robes of royalty spitefully dress'd—
Mid the taunts of the vile and the base—
See the Saviour of earth, who in heaven was caress'd,
Assailed by the finger of mortal disgrace—
As a mark for demoniac derision and jest—
For the miscreants spit in his merciful face.
But, alas! a more sad consummation of woe
Impurpled with anguish the snow of his brow;
For the outcasts of Israel were destined to fill
Their cup with a deadlier iniquity still.

Earth shook with affright through her rock-girded frame,
And the sun hid his head in the curtains of shame;
But the dedolent hearts of the Hebrews beheld
The Son of their God in his agony bleed,
Unmoved by the groanings of Nature, which swell'd
With awful convulsions, to witness the deed:
Till the Saviour, in suffering insufferable, cried,
"It is finish'd!" and bow'd himself meekly, and died.

It is finish'd!—the work of atoning for guilt:
The blood of the sinless for sin hath been spilt;
The chalice of death hath been fill'd to the brim,
And its deadliest drops have been dashed upon him.

It is finish'd!—the miscreants have finish'd the
crime,
Which stains, yet illumines, the annals of time.
It is finish'd!—the glory of Salem is o'er,
And vengeance is ready the vials to pour:
Ay, vengeance itself is commission'd to burst
With the thunder of God, on the city accurst;
By the wrath of Jehovah propell'd, it appears
Like an ocean of fire, and a forest of spears;
And a spirit more potent than Cæsar's is there,
Which forbids the proud Roman the pleasure to
spare.

It is finish'd!—the work of destruction is done;
Desolation's oblivious reign is begun;
And never again shall a temple adorn
The tenantless streets of Jerusalem;
Nor the ephod of priesthood in Salem be worn,
For the glory is fled from their city and them;
And divested of all, Mount Moriah shall mourn,
Unbless'd with a wall, and undeck'd with a gem.
For never again shall the Presence divine,
On its once holy top, in the Shechinah shine;
But, though swept from the face of the earth as a blot,
Shall the name of Jerusalem e'er be forgot?

No!—Earth may be hurl'd like a wreck from its place,
And the stars may be cast from the sky,
And Chaos again be the monarch of space:
But the spot where Messiah descended to die
Shall still be remember'd with reverence and love,
And recall'd in the songs of the angels above.

ON THE RETURN OF THE JEWS.

Oh! when shall the exiles of Judah return,
In the land of their fathers again to sojourn?
And when shall that country, so barren and lorn,
Again overflow with its honey and corn?
And when shall the pipe, and the song of the bard,
On the soft sunny valleys of Bethl'em be heard?
Or the fishers of Judah at evening awake
The echoes that sleep round Gennesaret's lake,
With an anthem of glory to Him whom the pride
Of their fathers rejected and crucified?

We know not, alas! but the word of the Lord
Assures us the wand'rers shall yet be restored;
And we doubt not his power the lost Hebrews to save,
And gather them back to the land which He gave,
Though the bramble and thorn luxuriantly grow
Where the flowers of the fig-tree in spring wont to blow;
Though its hills are deserted, uncultured its plain,
What was fruitful before may be fruitful again.
When the breath of the Lord on the wilderness blows,
Its bleakness shall blossom as fresh as the rose;
And He, who their sires through the wilderness led,
Can convert ev'n the mountain of Horeb to bread,
And again make Idumè and Lebanon pour
Their spices and incense, and Ophir its ore;
Till the temples of Salem to Jesus arise,
Outshining the first in their glory and size.

That God, who divided the sea for the feet [meat;
Of their fathers, and pour'd down the manna for
Who, when blacken'd and scorch'd by the burning
sunbeams,
Relieved them from death with miraculous streams;
Who, to shield them from foes, and their hearts to
inspire,
Directed their march with a pillar of fire,—
That God, for his wandering people, once more
To the land can its milk and its honey restore.

Oh! brightly the dawn of that morning shall rise,
Uniting the songs of the earth and the skies,
When the exiles of Judah to Judea shall come,
And again be rejoiced with a land and a home—
When the harp, which so long on the willow hath
hung,
To the music of Zion again shall be strung,
And the nations their incense and offerings shall
bring
To that nation which then shall rejoice with its king;
When He, who of old was rejected and slain,
With his saints in the cities of Salem shall reign.

Oh! glorious the sight of their gathering shall be,
From the ends of the earth, from the desert and sea,
Returning from lands where in exile they roved,
To the home of their sires—to the land which they
loved.
Methinks I can hear their loud shout of delight,
As the mountains of Israel arise to their sight:

Methinks I can see their light step as they pass,
In peaceful array, on the untrodden grass;
While each hill which they meet, and each plain they behold,
Tells them tales of their prophets and heroes of old—
Of the words which they spake, and the foes they o'erthrew—
Of the triumphs they sung, and the champions they slew—
And the brook, gently gliding along by their path,
Recalls the defeat of the hero of Gath.*
But now shall the triumphs of Judah excel
Her triumphs of old, when her enemies fell;
And her glory surpass all the splendour which shone
On the palace and temple of Solomon.
Now the sound of contention and battle shall cease,
For the Prince whom she owns is the Monarch of Peace;
And sweetly at evening and morning her flocks
Shall whiten her valleys and mantle her rocks,
And, bleating, exult in their strength and their speed,
For their lambkins no more by the altar shall bleed
No smoke shall ascend from her kids or her kine,
For her King hath already atoned for her sin:

* From the east end of the Wilderness you enter the famous Valley of Elah, where Goliah was slain by the Champion of Israel. Its appearance answers exactly to the description in Scripture. Tradition is not required to identify this spot. Nature has stamped it with everlasting features of truth. The brook still flows through it in a winding course from which David took the smooth stones.—*Crane's Letters from the East.*

And the dews shall descend, and the sunbeams
shall fall,
To gladden their pastures, and fatten their stall.
And the multiplied flocks, and the fructified soil,
Shall richly reward the attendance and toil
Of the long banish'd wand'rers, whose hearts shall
rejoice
In the love of their God and land of their choice.
All their sorrows and suff'rings their hearts shall
forget,
As they gaze on the beauties of Mount Olivet;
And, under the shade of their cedars and palms,
Salute their Redeemer with anthems and psalms.
Their tears and their sorrows—their shame and
their loss—
Shall all be repaid at the foot of the Cross;
Where the Jew and the Gentile their Saviour shall
meet,
And pour forth their love, like a stream, at his feet.

Oh! soon may the exiles of Judah return,
In the land of their fathers again to sojourn;
And soon may that country, so barren and lorn,
Again overflow with its honey and corn;
And soon may the sceptre to it be restored,
For then every heart shall be fill'd with the Lord.

A RANDOM THOUGHT.

If some could 'scape the gloomy grave,
And live in this low world for ever,

Then friends might weep if nought could save
A friend beloved from death's dark river.

But all must go; the rich—the poor—
Must cross that stream!—what matter when?
The longest here will most endure,
While friends in sorrow see their pain.

Yet weep!—these drops the heart relieve
When we are left and friends are gone;
And he is poor who cannot grieve
When left upon the earth alone.

Then let our wish to God on high,
Through life, be such a wish as this,
To live until prepared to die,
And only die when fit for bliss.

THE COUCH BY FRIENDSHIP SPREAD.

How sweet the couch by friendship spread,
Though coarse its quilt, and hard its fold!
Where shall the wanderer find a bed,
Though heap'd with down, and hung with gold,
So dearly loved, so warm, so soft,
As that where he hath lain so oft?

Oh! when our forms with toil are tired,
Or travel-worn our wearied feet—

What then so much to be desired,
So cheering, soothing, and so sweet,
As our own ingle's fitful gleams,
And our own couch of rosy dreams?

When 'nighted on the mountain road,
While o'er the rugged rocks we climb,
Fancy pourtrays our own abode,
And nerves anew each fainting limb,
To struggle with the dreary steep—
For dear is our own bed of sleep.

And oh! when on a distant coast,
Our steps are stayed by dire disease,
Who then, of those who watch the most,
Though kind, can have the power to please
Like those who watch'd disease's strife
At home, and soothed us back to life?

Where is the heart's soft silver chain
Which binds to earth our spirits weak—
Pardons the peevishness of pain—
Supplies the wants we cannot speak—
And with well-tried and patient care
Inspires our love, and prompts our prayer?

Alas! though kind the stranger's eye,
And kind his heart as heart can be,
There is a want—we know not why—
A face beloved we cannot see—
A something round our aching head
Unlike our own endearing bed.

When fired by fever's phantom chase,
We fling aside the curtain's fold,
It shews a face—a pitying face—
But ah! to us its cast seems cold;
And, with our last remains of pride,
We vainly strive our pain to hide.

But dear to us are those who wait
Around our couch, with kindred pain—
The long familiar friend or mate,
Whose softness woos us to complain—
Whose tear meets every tear that flows—
Whose sympathy relieves our woes.

O may I have, in life and death,
A bed where I may lay me down;
A home, a friend, whose every breath
May blend and mingle with my own;
Whose heart with mine in joy may beat,
Whose eye with mine in pain may meet.

And when at last the hour is come
Which bids my joy and sorrow cease,
When my pale lips grow hush'd and dumb,
And my tired soul hath fled in peace—
Then may some friend lay down my head
Into its last cold earthy bed.*

* This wish was gratified, and no more. His only brother—the writer of this note—"laid down his head;" but, except him, there was not a single friend or relative to assist in consigning his mortal part to the dust.

ANGELS WATCHING FOR THE SPIRITS OF THE JUST.

While round the good man's bed of death
His faithful friends are weeping,
Angels above, with joyful breath,
His jubilee are keeping.

They sing, and in their heavenly notes
His holy name is ringing,
And through the halls of heaven it floats:
Seraph and saint are singing.

They all rejoice with songs to see
His soul, unchained from earth,
Ready to mount—a spirit free—
To Him who gave it birth.

While mortals mourn, and weep, and pray,
Around him as he dies,
The angel-watchers sing, and say,
"He soon shall scale the skies!"

While mortals gather round his bed,
When death hath still'd the strife,
And sighing, say, "Alas! he's dead!"
Angels are shouting "Life!"

And when beneath the verdant sod
His silent dust they lay,
Jesus presents his soul to God,
Clothed in a rainbow-ray.

SACRAMENTAL LINES—1835.

THERE is glory, they say, in the presence and breath
Of the lofty on earth, who are heirs but of death;
There is glory, they say, in their smile—and their word
And their welcome ennobles the least:
But we, in the light of thy presence, O Lord!
Would assemble to-day round a richer board,
To partake of a holier feast.

And He who invites us and welcomes us there,
Ere the fabric of nature was made,
Encircled with glory, which none may declare,
The light of eternity shed,
From his aspect benign, on the glorious abode
Of the angels, who knelt in the palace of God.

We come at the bidding of Him
Who on Calvary bow'd down his head—
The Lord of the terrible cherubim!
Who descended to earth, and in agony bled,
That the meanest of men, and the deepest in guilt,
In glory might shine when the planets are dim;
When the oil of the bright burning stars shall be spilt,
Like droplets of fire from a chalice's brim;
When the angel shall wake, with a waft of his breath,
A harvest of life from the regions of death;
And the shouts of delight, and the wailings of woe,
Shall mingle to mark his ascent

From this perishing fire-shrouded world below,
Through the ruins and wreck of the firmament.

We come at the bidding of Him who inspires
The tempest-charged cloud with its wrath;
Who bids the volcano disgorge all its fires,
And the lightning speed on its path; [explode,
Who bids the deep mountain-pent earthquake
And shakes the vast empires of earth with his nod!

It is He who invites us to come—
For He is the lord of the feast;
It is He in whose presence archangels are dumb—
And He welcomes the poorest, the meanest, the least,
To sit at the table his servants have spread,
To drink of the cup, and to eat of the bread—
Those solemn memorials to men
Of the body he broke, and the blood which he shed,
To restore them from death, and unite them again
To their Saviour, their Lord, and their Head.

We come at thy bidding, O Lord!
To the feast of forgiveness and love.
May each vice thou abhorrest by us be abhorr'd;
May thy spirit descend from above,
And thy graces divine in abundance be pour'd,
Our souls to enlighten, our hearts to improve,
To strengthen our hopes, to encourage our faith,
To humble our pride, to enkindle our zeal,
To solace our grief and our bruises to heal,
And bright comfort to shed in the conflict of death.

SACRAMENTAL LINES—1836.

Another year hath pass'd away,
With all its hopes and all its fears,
And brought again this blessed day,
The brightest of our earthly years;
For though our dim eyes cannot see
As yet the glories we shall share,
Yet glorious surely it must be
To sit before the Saviour—
The tokens of his love to take.
With humble hearts and humble eyes
To break the bread, as Jesus brake
Before that glorious sacrifice
Which for a sinful world he made,
When he resign'd himself to die
For guilty man—by man betray'd
To suffer shame and agony.

SACRAMENTAL LINES—1837.

Once more at thy bless'd table, Lord!
I humbly take my seat
With those who would thy name—adored—
In reverence repeat.

Full often thou hast seen me here
In years that are gone bye,
Upon that table lean my head
Like one about to die:

Hast seen me sad and spiritless
To thee for comfort look,
While the memorials of thy love
With trembling hand I took;

And on the worshippers around
A silent farewell cast,
Believing that bless'd sacrament
On earth should be my last.

Thou hast seen my spirit broken down,
My body faint and weak—
Wearing death's cheerless tokens on
My wan and wasted cheek.

Thou hast seen the hopes of happiness
All withering round my heart,
And heard my soul in secret sigh,
Preparing to depart.

And thou to me hast long been kind,
And spared me from the grave,
And now, O stretch thy blessed arms
My sinful soul to save.

SACRAMENTAL LINES—1838.*

O Lord! munificent, benign,
How many mercies have been mine
Since last I met with thee

* The Sacrament here alluded to was administered on the second Sabbath of June; and it may be remarked, that it

In that blest ordinance of thine—
The holy feast of Bread and Wine
Which was enjoyed by me.

How many days, in goodness sent,
Have been in sickening sadness spent!
How many nights have come
Which promised rest and sweet content,
Yet left behind them when they went
Distress, and grief, and gloom!

How many purposes have fail'd!
How many doubts my heart assail'd!
And held my spirit fast:
How many sins have been bewail'd!
How many follies have prevail'd!
Since I confess'd the last.

But still to thee my spirit springs,
And underneath thy shelt'ring wings
A safe asylum seeks;
For this memorial sweetly brings
Remembrance of thy sufferings,
And all thy kindness speaks:

was the last at which the Pastor of the parish, (the Rev. Laurence Millar) officiated, and likewise the last at which the author of these lines took his seat—the former being dead, and the latter too ill to attend before another opportunity occurred. The pieces have been given together, because, with the exception of the last, they are written on the same sheet. One of them at least was composed on the morning of the Sacramental Sabbath; and it is highly probable that the others were the same.

And, like a little child, I lay
My spirit at thy feet, and say,
"Lord, take it—it is thine:
Teach it to trust, to fear, to pray—
Feed it with love by night and day,
And let thy will be mine."

INFANT DEVOTION.

How does the feeble infant feel,
When taught, by sober age, to kneel
Before that awful power, which shakes
Creation with a word, and makes
Vast worlds, like atoms, reel?

Believes it that the lisping voice
Which makes a parent's heart rejoice—
Inspiring love, and faith, and zeal—
Rises above the thunder peal!
Dreams it how far faint accents reach?
Knows it the potency of speech?
Conceives it what it asks? or why
It turns to Heaven its earnest eye?

Perchance the limits of its mind
Are yet too narrow and confined
To comprehend the vast amount
Of mercy craved on Christ's account;
Or to compute the power, above,
Of its own piety and love;

Where weakest words have mightiest weight,
And simple orisons are great.

Yet, by the earnest look, and by
The hush of deep solemnity
Which I have seen diffused abroad
At mention of the name of God—
Stilling at once the playful noise
Of infant games, and infant joys;—
And by the oft half-hidden tear
Which flow'd some holy truth to hear—
By things like these, as by a part,
I still would judge the infant's heart:
And he who prompts its simple prayer
Will be the best interpreter.

Nor will his promise fail—or truth—
To those who in the bud of youth
On his protecting mercy hung,
And praised him with a lisping tongue;
For "those," 'tis said, "who early seek
Shall find," although the voice be weak;
And blessings asked—as unawares—
By infant tongues, in lisped prayers,
May fall upon their riper years
To beautify the "vale of tears,"
As precious treasures, long mislay'd,
Forgot, and lost, but undecay'd,
Discovered in the hour of need,
Give unexpected joy indeed—
So age, in bankruptcy of joy,
May find the blessings which the boy

Besought from Heaven, at last descend
To brighten life's dark latter end.
Teach then, ye parents, teach, with care,
To every child the voice of prayer,
That God, when man has done his part,
May claim the homage of the heart.

WITHERED FLOWERS.

Adieu! ye withered flowerets!
Your day of glory's past;
But your latest smile was loveliest,
For we knew it was your last.
No more the sweet aroma
Of your golden cups shall rise,
To scent the morning's stilly breath,
Or gloaming's zephyr sighs.

Ye were the sweetest offerings
Which friendship could bestow—
A token of devoted love
In pleasure or in woe!
Ye graced the head of infancy,
By soft affection twined,
Into a fairy coronal,
Its sunny brows to bind.

Ye deck'd the coffins of the dead,
By yearning sorrow strew'd
Along each lifeless lineament,
In death's cold damps bedew'd;

Ye were the pleasure of our eyes
In dingle, wood, and wold,
In the parterre's sheltered premises,
And on the mountain cold.

But ah! a dreary blast hath blown
Athwart you in your bloom,
And, pale and sickly, now your leaves,
The hues of death assume.
We mourn your vanished loveliness,
Ye sweet departed flowers!
For ah! the fate which blighted you
An emblem is of ours.

There comes a blast to terminate
Our evanescent span:
For frail as your existence, is
The mortal life of man!
And is the land we hasten to
A land of grief and gloom?
No: there the Lilly of the Vale,
And Rose of Sharon bloom!

And there a stream of extacy
Through groves of glory flows,
And on its banks the Tree of Life
In heavenly beauty grows.
And flowers that never fade away,
Whose blossoms never close,
Bloom round the walks where angels stray,
And saints redeem'd repose.

And though, like you, sweet flowers of earth,
We wither and depart,
And leave beind, to mourn our loss,
Full many an aching heart.
Yet, when the winter of the grave
Is past, we hope to rise,
Warm'd by the Sun of Righteousness,
To blossom in the skies.

PITY.

Oh sweet is the dawn of the morning to me,
And sweet is the evening's close,
And sweet is the lily's fair blossom to see,
And sweet is the blush of the rose;
But sweeter to me, and far more dear—
As it falls from the eye—is Pity's bright tear.

The charms which repose on a woman's soft cheek,
That gem of feeling heightens;
And the swimming eye, with a lustre meek,
And a holier radiance, it brightens:
For the beauties of earth, as they shed it, combine
With their frailties the feelings of spirits divine.

On the brow of the hero what majesty spreads,
As he bends o'er his fallen foes,
And the soft tear of sympathy silently sheds,
While he pities their wounds and their woes,
And sends up to heaven his forgiveness and prayer,
Like the heralds of mercy to welcome them there.

The great, greater grow in the sight of their God,
When they look upon sorrow and pain
With tears of compassion; for Jesus bestow'd
His tears on the sufferings of men:
And pity will shine in the sons of renown,
More bright than the gems of a coronet or crown.

The poorest of those who bestow but a tear—
Their all—on the griefs of the poor;
In the sight of their God from on high must appear
Like angels, compared with the miser and boor,
Whose hearts, with the hardness of iron, can brook,
Without feelings of pity on sorrow, to look.

What is it which makes the sad widow to sing,
And the heart of the orphan rejoice?
It is Pity's benevolent offering,
And Pity's affectionate voice
Which supplies all their wants—overcomes all
their fears— [cheers.
And the gloom of their solitude brightens and

What is it which soothes the sad throb of disease,
And buoys up the spirit to bear
Those pangs which Affection would suffer to ease,
And Friendship in sympathy share?
It is Pity's bright tear which distils from the eye,
While the soul is contending for mercy on high.

What is it which makes the dread moment of death
A moment of victory prove?

'Tis the triumph of hope, and the vision of faith,
Which presents to the Christian the pardoning love
Of Him who renounced all the bliss of the sky,
And descended, in PITY, for sinners to die.

MELANCHOLY.

THERE is a feeling of the mind
Distinct alike from joy and woe:
'Tis sad, but placid and resigned,
And pleased with all it meets below.

It mantles o'er the paly cheek,
It lurks behind the languid eye;
Its language is the soft and meek
Expression of a noiseless sigh.

Oft it keeps vigil with the good,
And watches nightly with the wise;
And oft the bard, in solitude,
Feels its alternate fall and rise.

And oft it mounts, and sweetly glows
The spirit of pathetic song:
And sometimes, too, through mirth it flows,
Gliding all noiselessly along.

But chiefly upon future scenes
It pores with anxious earnestness—

Fathoms the gulf of time, and leans
Delighted o'er the dark abyss.

It scans eternity—and there
It finds that mystery which inspires
Its musings with the voice of prayer,
And moulds its fancies to desires.

Could soul be shewn in shape or form,
I'd shape this aspect of the mind
Like some fair female—chaste and warm,
And young and beautiful—but blind!

And, like a muse of melodies,
I'd make her sit by Genius' side,
And fan, with her celestial sighs,
His paly brow of thoughtful pride.

And in her mien majestic, high
A pensive smile I would pourtray;
And make her soft and sightless eye
With deep and thoughtful sadness play.

And for a name, I would baptise
This modest maid, so meek and holy,
The Muse's sister—Queen of Sighs,
The Poet's bride—Sweet Melancholy.

A SAINT.

A LOVELY vision fills my mind,
A picture which I fain would paint:
Its colours are those virtues—kind—
Sweetly contrasted and combined,
Which meeting make a saint.

Conceived in sin—in weakness born—
I see the embryo Christain cast
Upon a world where all must mourn.
Where joy and grief, applause and scorn,
Alternate follow fast.

He grows—temptations with him grow,
Within him passions rise;
And worldly pomp, and worldly show,
Is all his nature seeks to know,
Forgetful of the skies.

Allured by fashion's glittering toys,
And Mammon's golden store,
His soul is fill'd with earthly joys,
And all its energy employs,
These idols to adore.

And he is proud of wealth and fame;
And with contemptuous eye
Surveys each poor unletter'd name
Which can no earthly honour claim,
Though register'd on high.

But mark! a change comes o'er him now,
As God his power reveals;
And outward pain, and inward woe,
Soften his high fastidious brow,
And his hard heart anneals.

From earthly vanity set free,
He looks on all with love;
Convinced the meanest here may be
Eternally as great as he,
In the bright world above.

No more proud passion's fever burns
Within his placid breast:
The blandishments of courts he spurns,
And to the lowly Jesus turns,
Deeming that pattern best.

No more he bows at Mammon's shrine;
He covets wealth no more:
He longs, with feelings more divine,
To make the sufferer's aspect shine,
And help the helpless poor.

No more he sighs for earthly fame,
Mingled with earthly strife:
His wish is now to have a claim,
Through Jesus' blood, to write his name
In the fair book of life.

No more he strives for earthly power,
Save power to soothe distress—

To cheer the orphan's chilly bower,
The lonely widow's darkest hour
Of solitude to bless.

Where'er there is a tear to dry,
Or bleeding heart to balm,
His liberal hand, his pitying eye,
With comfort and with aid are nigh.
The sufferer's soul to calm.

And while diffusing joy to men,
His own devoted breast
Receives all that it gives again
In triumphs o'er defeated pain,
And is by blessing bless'd.

Yet not for earthly pomp or praise
He soothes affliction's moan:
No; far above such selfish ways,
His soul hath learn'd its thoughts to raise
To God's eternal throne.

Thus, like an angel clothed in clay,
On mercy's errand sent,
He holds through life his blissful way,
And every hour, and every day,
In mercy's work are spent.

And when, with the bright smile of faith
And pure benevolence,

He heaves his last, last earthly breath,
Rejoicing o'er defeated death,
Angels shall bear him hence.

THE LAND OF REST.

I saw an old old man—his eye,
Though sunk, was beaming bright,
As the deep azure of the sky,
With more than mortal light.

Yet life's enchanted cup was drain'd,
And life's last sands fell fast,
And friends were gone, and he remain'd—
Of all he loved—the last.

Why then, 'mid weariness and woe,
That heavenly smile impress'd?
Because he was a pilgrim to—
And near the Land of Rest.

I saw a youth of manly mould
Upon a sick bed lying;
His cheek was pale, his hand was cold,
For he, poor youth, was dying.

Yet on that cheek was seen to glow
A sweet and gentle smile,
Like sunbeam on the mountain snow
Which melts away the while.

And wherefore did he smile to leave
The friends who were so dear?
And wherefore did he see them grieve,
Nor answer with a tear?

And why, since life was in its spring,
Fresh as the morning dew—
Since hope with honey'd hand might bring
New joys and pleasures new,

Why was he pleased to part with all
Those visions bright and sweet,
At life's fast fleeting festival,
With friends no more to meet?

Far brighter hopes were given to be
A comfort to his breast;
His friends were journeying to—and he
Was near the Land of Rest.

I saw a maiden, modest, mild,
In beauty's sunny morn—
Simplicity's own darling child,
Of sainted mother born.

Brothers and sisters by her side,
A lovely flower she grew,
And still it was her family's pride
To have her in their view.

And she was happy, young, and good,
Beloved, and loving well,

Fitted alike in solitude
Or social scenes to dwell.

But ah! a chill came o'er her cheek,
Which blanched its rosy charms;
And yet she seem'd, though maiden weak,
To feel no dire alarms.

Consumption slowly stole away
That cheek's enchanting dye,
But still a soul which scorn'd decay
Beam'd in her kindled eye.

And why was she content to part
With all the joys of earth—
The youth who won her gentle heart,
The dame who gave her birth,

The brothers who endear'd her bower,
The sire who soothed her care,
The sisters who, at evening hour,
Had join'd with her in prayer?

These stood around her dying bed
To watch her closing eye;
They saw her smile, when speech had fled,
And death was drawing nigh.

In that dread hour, how could she smile,
By the grim tyrant press'd?
Her soul had caught a glimpse the while
Of the bless'd Land of Rest.

I saw a mother bound to earth
By ties which none may know,
Save those who feel their children's mirth,
And share their children's woe.

Around her play'd an infant band,
And one sweet baby hung
Upon her breast, and with its hand
Her floating tresses wrung.

And in its mother's fading face
So winningly it smiled,
That angels might have paused a space
To gaze upon that child.

But she who gave that baby birth
Appear'd about to go
From smiles of love, and hopes of earth,
To the dark world below.

And then she wept—that mother wept
From her fond babes to part;
And oft she watch'd them while they slept,
With sad and yearning heart.

But as the dreaded hour drew nigh,
And paler grew her cheek,
A dawning brightness in her eye
Extatic thoughts would speak.

She cast each helpless innocent
On a Guardian strong to save,

And welcomed the dark message, sent
To summon to the grave.

How could she part from babes so sweet,
So tenderly caress'd?
Because she hoped with them to meet
In the bless'd Land of Rest.

And with a soul sedate she pour'd
Her parting prayer to Heaven,
And trusted to heaven's gracious Lord
The gifts which he had given.

And one by one her children dear
She bless'd with tender care,
Then pass'd, without a sob or tear,
To rest for ever there.

All these had triumph'd through the flame
Of heavenly love, impress'd
By Him who died to buy for them
That blessed Land of Rest.

And thus the simple power of faith
O'ermasters fear and woe;
And, conquering the dread tyrant death,
Conquers our latest foe!

NATIVE SCENES.

Sweet scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
Or sportive youth to stray in;
For manhood to enjoy his strength,
Or age to wear away in.

WORDSWORTH.

ALAS! to loftier minds than mine
The innate gift of noble song,
And glorious energies, divine,
Of stirring eloquence belong.

Be then my theme, a homely theme,
Yet not unmeet for lady's eyes,
Whose spirit can enjoy the dream
Of flowery fields, and glowing skies—

Whose heart is form'd to feel the spells—
The unutterable charm which binds
To native groves and native dells
Pure uncontaminated minds.

The beauties of my native vale,
And beauties of my native lake,
In other hearts perchance may fail
The chords of sympathy to wake;

But there are some whose eyes may see
This simple uninspired song,
Whose hearts have felt, perchance, like me,
That fascination strange and strong.

The gentle hills, which round enclose
A rural amphitheatre sweet,
Seem calmly watching the repose
Of the green landscape at their feet.

And whatsoe'er on earth is fair,
Of sylvan shades, or waters pure,
Or flowery fields, collected there,
Appears in beauteous miniature.

There blossoms many a lovely tree
Whose shade the pensive spirit calms,
More pleasing far, I ween, to me
Than all the pride of Indian palms.

At eventide I there may range
Through silent walks, in thoughtful strain—
Through solitudes I would not change
For myrtle groves or Grecian plain.

Let those who have no homes to leave—
No hearts their dwellings to endear—
No friends their absence would bereave,
To distant lands for pleasure steer.

Where Nature's fairest features shine,
In quest of beauty let them go,
To wander by the banks of Rhine,
Or gaze upon the Alpine snow;

Or on Lake Leman's glassy breast,
On summer days embark and glide,

Where mightiest bards have soothed to rest
Their troubled thoughts and wounded pride.

But still let my enchanted eye
Behold the lake I love the best;
Still in the woods which round it lie,
Contented let me toil, or rest.

More dear to me the meanest stream
Which winds my native plains among,
Than Hermus or Meander seem
In all the pomp of classic song.

Not even the far-famed Castalay
My soul with such delight could fill,
As the scant brooks which murmuring play
Adown each long-frequented hill—

To feed with ever fresh supplies
The lake upon whose surface clear
The hues which gild the evening skies
In mirror'd majesty appear;

Where, mingling with the clouds of heaven,
Surrounding fields, and forests green,
Begemm'd by the bright star of even,
All meet to variegate the scene—

Till darkness gather to conceal
That bright and beautiful display,
And the sad moralist must feel
How soon all earthly joys decay.

Oh! not on earth's extended sphere
  Can fairer fields or waters gleam
Than those which fancy renders dear,
  When brighten'd by affection's beam.

Amid these scenes, I fain would spend
  Life's short'ning and uncertain lease,
And bless'd with hope, await its end,
  When He who conquer'd Death may please.

But if it be my destined lot,
  In future years of toil, to roam
Far from each fair familiar spot
  Which smiles around my cottage-home,

May Heaven this boon vouchsafe to me,
  With joyful footsteps to return,
Once more my native fields to see
  Ere life's faint taper cease to burn;

And in some love-endear'd abode,
  While those sweet scenes around me lie,
Breathe forth my soul in sighs to God,
  And 'mid the prayers of friendship die!

THE EARLY DEAD.

Sad is the task to moralize
The grave of early youth above,
But death will dim the brightest eyes,
And quench, alas! the warmest love:
Yet we would hope the shaft which flies,
Passing the vulture to the dove,
Sends but the holy to the skies,
Through scenes of happiness to move—
To 'scape the toils, and griefs, and cares
Of waning life and hoary hairs.

But who can see the lovely form
Of blooming youth consign'd to death,
Nor grieve to think the slimy worm
Should banquet on so sweet a wreath!
It is as if the pride of Spring—
Her fairest flower—the beauteous rose,
Affection's holiest offering,
Were blighted ere its bud unclose—
Its fragrance, and its glorious dyes
For ever lost to mortal eyes.

Yes—all must grieve whose eyes may see
The early dead resign'd to earth;
All—all must grieve, but chiefly she
Who gave the human floweret birth;
Who nursed it on a mother's knee,
Who watch'd its first essays at mirth—

Dreaming the while it yet should be
A gem of more than common worth—
Who pillow'd on her nurturing breast
Its infant head in balmy rest.

Oh! who can tell a mother's bliss,
When gazing on an only child,
She feels its infantine caress,
Its lisping love, its gambols wild?
And who can picture her distress,
When on the same sweet placid face
She sees the terrible impress
Of death destroying every grace,
And stealing each enchanting charm
From the soft cheek and lip so warm?

Alas! as o'er the dead she stands,
The big tears falling thick and fast,
With trembling knees and clasped hands,
Like bulrush quivering in the blast,
No more she meets the soft reply,
Once to her yearning heart so dear,
Of that bedimm'd and closed eye,
Whose ray was wont to be so clear—
Whose smiles around were sown so thick,
Whose glances once had been so quick.

No more the golden beam of hope
Gilds the far future with its light;
No more through Time's dim telescope
She sees the glowing vision bright.

As erst, when down life's fairy stream
Fancy was wont to take its flight,
And oft again enjoy'd the dream,
With growing rapture and delight,
When her own child, so fair, so good,
Had grown to man or womanhood.

Oh! what a chain of cherish'd joys
Is blown, like gossamer, away,
When death's unsparing hand destroys
The mother's promise-bud in May!
Yet we would hope the shaft which flies,
Passing the vulture to the dove,
Sends but the holy to the skies,
Through scenes of happiness to move—
To 'scape the toils, the griefs, the cares,
Of waning life and hoary hairs.

LINES WRITTEN ON THE LAST NIGHT OF THE YEAR 1832.

Now heavily returns the solemn night,
Veiling in sables her recondite brow—
Last of the year—once pregnant with delight
To my young heart; but oh! how alter'd now!
Gone is gay fancy's soft vivacious light—
Gone are my boyish hopes of bliss below,
And calm and lonely as the anchorite [flight.
I count my fleeting hours, and smile upon their

Ah! what a change a few short years can bring!
But late, I was a wild and thoughtless boy,
Who would have laugh'd at such a sober thing
As I am now, with nothing to enjoy
Save silent meditation. In the ring
Of frolic I was first, and last to cloy,
But now my spirit hath relax'd its spring, [cling.
And sickens o'er the scenes to which it wont to

Oh! with what rapture such a night as this
Was hail'd by my concomitants and me:
Long ere it came, the source of fancied bliss;
And when it came, a fund of fun and glee
To boys, disguised and masking youths, whose dress
Excited mirth—whose long beards reached their knee;
Flowing from chins whose smoothness did confess
They were too long to grow from so much happiness.

And I was there, acting my part with these,
Laughing as loud, and mingling with the mirth;
But years of silent sufferance and disease
Tries all our pleasures, and displays their worth,
And makes us court deep solitude and ease,
And calm reflection on the lonely hearth—
For that which pleased in health will scarcely please
The soul whose watchful eye waits for its last release.

LINES

ON HEARING AN UNKNOWN BIRD SING SWEETLY AT HALF-PAST THREE ON A SUMMER MORNING.

I THANK thee, little warbling bird,
For that sweet sylvan song of thine;
A sweeter voice I never heard,
Nor saw a fairer plumage shine.

Thou art—I cannot spell thy name;
Thou camest from—I know not where;
But this I know—that thou art tame,
And this I see—that thou art fair:

And this I feel—no earthly eye
Save thine, bright bird, is fix'd on me.
Sweet minister of melody,
I could for ever gaze on thee.

Then stay, sweet stranger! I invite
Thy song to cheer my solitude:
Oh, vain request! thy wings so bright
Already bear thee to the wood.

These orient plumes, 'mid many hues,
That song 'mid rust'ling leaves is lost;
And I am left alone to muse
O'er foolish wishes early cross'd.

Yet wherefore mourn?—the hour of bliss
Enjoy while yet its moments last;
But grieve no more for that or this,
For all we love must soon be past.

SABBATH EVE.

How calm, how still, this hallow'd eve!
Methinks the heart might cease to grieve
While gazing on that arch so blue,
With mercy mirror'd in its hue,
And think how short a time may bring
Repose from earthly suffering;
Or lend a wing to mount above
The spheres in which the planets move.

The vesper star begins to beam,
But scarce its image strikes the stream,
For summer's faintness o'er it creeps,
And all its bolder sparkles keeps
Entangled 'mid the misty light
Which fills the azure vault of night,
While earth and sky appear imbued
With the deep soul of solitude.

The day hath passed in praise and prayer,
Now evening comes more still and fair;
The holy heavens are free from gloom,
The earth is green, and gay with bloom;
The blackbird's whistled note is high,
Ringing in woodland melody:
And though the cushat 'mid the grove
Be plaining, still his plaint is love.

If we could feel as men should feel
When heaven and earth their sweets reveal,

Our selfish sorrows all would cease
On such a solemn eve of peace,
And Nature's stillnes would compose
Our souls, and dissipate our woes;
And from our spirits softly call
Pure hopes and thoughts devotional.

THE WISH.

I WOULD that wealth were mine!—
Not that I wish to shine
In pleasure's circles fine,
Where the gay
Their useless wealth consume,
Amid luxury and fume,
Nor where faded beauties bloom
In decay.

It is not that I would pore
On a still-increasing store,
Or with a miser's wish for more
Ever pant;
But that I would impart
Peace to each aching heart
Which feels the bitter smart
Of pale want;

That I the joy might taste
Of spreading forth the feast,
With the hungry for my guest,
And the poor;

That beneath my humble shed
The needy might be fed,
And the lame and blind be led
To my door.

It is the purest bliss
Which the wealthy can possess,
To make man's sufferings less,
And behold
In th' lately streaming eye,
With gratitude grown dry,
Turn'd meekly to the sky:
The use of gold.

TRUE WISDOM.

More bless'd is he, his soul more wise,
Who learns himself to know,
Than he who maps the bending skies,
Or counts the flowers which blow;
Or, like the sapient Stygerite,
Can class the burning stars of night;
Or, with the Swedish sage's eyes,
Arrange in families fair and meet
Each shrub, and tree, and grass, which lies
Scatter'd beneath the wanderer's feet.

For flowers must fade, and stars must sink,
And earth must pass away,
But that which thinks must ever think,
And never know decay:

And greater he whose soul hath brought
Within control each wandering thought,
  Than he whose warlike skill hath led
Armies to battle and renown;
  And, while unnumber'd victims bled,
Grasp'd sword and sceptre, throne and crown.

But greatest those who fear to boast,
  And strongest those who feel
Their follies and their faults the most;
  For weakness can conceal
Its head beneath the shade of pride,
And pride can weave a web to hide
  Its own unhallow'd sway,
But he who knows himself will tear
  The tawdry mask away,
And to be humble nobly dare.

Within the mind—a universe—
  Some flowers may still be found—
Some lovely flowers which sin's submerse
  Has never wholly drown'd—
Some buds of Eden's happier prime,
Spared in the punishment of crime,
  Which Heaven can yet revive
And cherish into bloom,
  And we should weed our hearts and strive
To give these blossoms room.

Benevolence, charity, and love,
  Are still by mortals felt,

And pity still hath power to move,
  And sympathy to melt;
And though around us must remain
The stigma of our primal stain,
  Yet those by Heaven made wise,
To watch the wilderness within,
  May rear the flowers of Paradise
Above the noxious weeds of sin.

May He who knows our weakest part
  Illume with heavenly light
Each self-inspecting wanderer's heart,
  And make its darkness bright,
And aid each mortal effort made
The path in which He trode to tread,
  That we through Him may rise,
And like Him shine, and with Him share
  The boundless glories of the skies,
Which he hath labour'd to prepare.

INVOCATION.

Come forth ye gentle flowerets,
  Sweet harbingers of spring,
For the air, though calm, lacks cheerfulness,
  Till you your odours bring.

The gentle gales are gone abroad,
  On the mountain side to play;

The sunbeams dance upon the plain:
Come forth and share the day.

The joyous lark hath mounted high,
On the rainbow's arch to sing,
And the humble bees, in search of you,
Are humming on the wing.

Come forth from your cold beds of dust,
And drink the crystal dews,
And to the charms of music add
The odours you diffuse.

Come forth, like emblems of the past,
And gently bring to view
The friends with whom we gather'd flowers
When life to us was new—

Who twined with us the daisy's wreath
With childhood's tiny hands—
Who now have wander'd from their homes
To far and foreign lands.

Oh! how they would rejoice to see,
And gather with a smile
The first sweet flowers which deck the soil
Of their own native isle.

Come forth, memorials of the dead,
And to our memories bring
Deep dreams of those who coldly sleep
Beyond the reach of Spring.

Come forth and show the power of Him
Who wakes you with his breath—
Whose smile can renovate the dust,
And break the bands of death!

STANZAS—1834.

Oh! to be landed in safety where
Grief cannot come o'er the heavy heart,
Nor shadow, nor gloom, of the demon Despair,
A moment of suffering impart.
Oh! to be over death's dark gloomy river,
To rejoice in the day-beam beyond it for ever.

But appalling groans, and ominous screams,
Arise our souls to affright,
And embitter the sweets of our happiest dreams,
As we gaze on that valley of night;
Where the dreary absinthian waters of death
Roll, dashing our hopes, and disturbing our faith.

The shrieks of despair, and the wailings of woe,
Are heard 'mid the fathomless gloom, [flow,
But no mortal may pierce to the gulf whence they
Or discover the depth of his doom:
For the blackness of darkness appals the poor heart, [and chart.
Which hath lost its bright pole-star, its compass

May He who has pass'd through that river before,
Who knows all its reefs and its rocks,

A passage of peace for our spirits explore,
Enlighten its shadows, and shield from its shocks,
And pilot us safe to that region beyond,
Where the righteous no more shall despair or despond.

THE RETURN OF SPRING.

Sweet Spring returns: again the blossoming trees
Ring with the murmurs of the busy bees;
The deep recesses of the sombre grove
Resign their silence to the songs of love;
The teeming earth shakes off the winter's gloom,
And clothes her gentle hills in robes of bloom;
The sunshine, glancing through the tepid shower,
Bursts every bud, and bathes each opening flower;
The balmy zephyrs from the genial south
Come gently, like the healthful breath of youth,
And breathing sweets, and singing birds conspire
To make my walk accord to my desire.

This lovely scene—this calm and tranquil night—
Might waken fancy, or inspire delight,
Or thrill the youthful heart with dreams of love,
Or draw the prayer of piety above.
Each turn I take presents some object dear
To please my eye, or sound to soothe my ear;
The sigh of leaves, the tinkling of the rill,
Oft heard before, yet heard with pleasure still;

The song of birds—that melody which heaven
To charm the poorest child of earth hath given—
Prove that the pleasures of the poor are dear
To Him who regulates the varying year.

The rich can purchase harp, and lute, and lyre,
The instrumental and the vocal choir,
Yet arts like these, when long continued, cloy,
And fail to stir the soul to notes of joy:
But who can tire of Nature's artless song,
Though oft repeated, and continued long?
The notes these warblers of the woods inspire,
All can enjoy alike, and all admire.
The sudden gush which fills the fairy dell—
The pause abrupt—the wild instinctive swell—
The deep response return'd from distant trees,
Mellow'd and soften'd on the evening breeze—
Can make the rudest rustic pause to hear,
And charm the nicest, most capricious ear.*

THE FIRST OF WINTER.

Oh! sadly sighs the wint'ry breeze
Along the desert lea;
And moaning 'mid the forest trees
It sings a dirge to me—
The solemn dirge of dying flowers—

* The foregoing appears to be only the beginning of what had been intended for a poem of some length.

The death-song of the emerald bowers—
  The first loud whistled lay
Which summons winter's stormy powers
  On his coronation day,

Darker and darker grows the sky;
  With voice more loud, and louder still
  The stormy winds sweep by, and fill
The ear with awful melody.
Each tone of that majestic harp
Wakes other tones within to warp
My soul away, amid its bass,
To the greenwood, which lately was
  A picture to my eye—
Which now is murk and bare!—alas!
  Its sere-leaves rustle by.

But ah! that tempest music tells
  A tale which saddens more—
Of hearts it tells where sorrow dwells
  On many a rocky shore,
Where the poor bark is dash'd and driven,
And plunged below, and toss'd to heaven,
  Amid the ocean's roar.
And oh! its wild and varied song
  Hath an appalling power,
As swellingly it sweeps along
  O'er broken tree and blasted flower.
The loud, loud laugh of frenzied lips,
  The sigh of sorrowing breath,
The dread, dread crash of sinking ships,
  The gurgling shriek of death,

Affection's wildest, warmest wish,
Devotion's holiest cry,
Are blended with that maddening blast,
And on the chords of sympathy
Their varying accents now are cast.

Sad voices to the maid it bears
Who, wrapp'd in sorrow, sits,
And in her dreaming fancy hears,
Amid its calmer fits,
The shriek of her expiring lover,
As the white wave rolls rudely over
His sinking head and struggling breath,
And dips him in the gulf of death.
It tells of orphans and of mothers,
Poor, helpless, and bereft—
It bears the love, the grief of brothers,
In lonely sufferance left;
It wafts the wail of strong despair,
Mingled with murmur'd sounds of prayer.
And true hearts throb, and bright young eyes
With burning tear-drops glisten,
As round and round its thunders rise,
Or slow in solemn moaning dies,
Saddening the ears that listen.

Yet more—it tells of more—
Of Him who on its murky wing
Rides calmly, and directs its roar,
Or stills it with his nod:
Its voice is raised even now to sing
A wilder melody to God,

Who holds it in night's silent hush
  Within the hollow of his hand,
Or bids it from his presence rush
  In desolation o'er the land:
At his command alone it raves
O'er roofless cots and tumbling waves.

THE SIXTH PSALM.

O Lord, rebuke me not in wrath,
  Nor chasten in thine ire!
With mercy smoothe affliction's path,
  And lift me from the mire.

My soul is also sad. How long,
  O God, shall sorrow be
The subject of my daily song
  And nightly prayer to Thee?

Return, O Lord, in peace return,
  My feeble form to save!
No thanks can issue from the urn,
  No praises from the grave.

In weariness and pain alone
  My sleepless watch I keep,
Making to night my ceaseless moan—
  My bed with tears I steep.

My eyes with grief grow old and dim—
O Lord solace my woes—
Let brighter hopes illumine them,
And scatter all my foes!

Depart from me, ye sons of guile,
For God hath heard my voice,
And bless'd with his inspiring smile,
My spirit shall rejoice.

But let the brand of sin and shame
Upon my enemies fall,
And let the grief which from them came
Return upon them all.

THE PRAYER OF THE FATHERLESS.

Since thou hast call'd our parents hence
By thy all wise decree,
O Father of the fatherless,
Our trust is placed in Thee.

Thou know'st our fears and loneliness—
Thou know'st our bitter grief—
O Father of the fatherless,
Be near for our relief.

Thou know'st the wants that trouble us,
And all our cares dost see,

O Father of the fatherless,
A rich provider be.

Thou see'st the bands that fetter us,
Keep us from evil free,
O Father of the fatherless,
Direct our steps to Thee.

When freed at last from earthliness,
For evermore may we,
O Father of the fatherless,
In Heaven thy children be.

THE HAPPY HOME.

How sad the wanderer's lonely breast,
To home, and friends, and country lost,
When from the waves escaped to rest
Upon some desert island's coast!
But if he see the whitening sail
Bear down upon that lonely isle,
Then hopes will o'er his fears prevail,
And paint his aspect with a smile.

And if the bark which now appears,
Stemming the dark green ocean wave,
Prove, as the desert coast she nears,
Freighted with friends who come to save—

How quick he leaves the barren strand,
And dashes through the girdling foam,
To reach again his native land,
And kindred dear, and happy home.

How earnestly he woos the breeze,
Which seems to loiter on its way,
To urge his bark across the seas
To where affection's sunbeams play!
Oh! how he pants again to see
The walks where he was wont to roam,
His native hill, his native tree,
His native lake, and happy home!

And how he longs again to clasp
The friends who gave each scene a charm—
Who, ere he parted from their grasp,
Bedew'd his hand with tear-drops warm.
And oh! how joyful is the day
Which brings him from the ocean foam,
With them to walk, with them to pray,
With them to share his happy home!

And what are we but exiles here?
Upon a desert island cast;
If hope or joy our bosoms cheer,
How brief the season which they last!
And when our friends are gone before,
Through happier climes above to roam,
Why linger we upon the shore,
Nor long to reach our happy home?

We know our parted friends are there,
  Ready to hail us from the storm,
With angel eyes so bright, so fair!
  With kindred souls so pure, so warm!
And though the waves, which we must cross,
  Be dark, or only white with foam,
Why should we fear?—secure from loss,
  They bear us to a happy home.

RELIGION.

As valour is in hearts, and not in swords,
Religion is in thoughts, and not in words.

Religion walks not in the noon-day blaze,
With pedant pomp, that giddy men may gaze:
Hers is the soul sincere—the bashful heart:
She moves in silence through life's noisy mart.
Humility informs her mien divine,
And calm retirement is her holy shrine.
She goes not forth plumed in audacious pride,
With canting affectation by her side;
But those her gentle spirit would reclaim
From folly's mazes, and the path of shame,
She bears in prayer to Him, whose glorious part
It is to change, as well as rule the heart;
And, by her meek example, strives to teach
Where vanity would prompt to stand and preach!
Nor will she ere to slander condescend:
She veils the failings which she cannot mend.
A friend to all that heart must ever prove,
Whose every thought and feeling still is love.

And still her gentle step will linger near
The spot which Misery moistens with a tear;
Where her soft hand, unknown to all, may pour
The cordial to disease, and health restore:
Or, under cloud of night, while luxury sleeps,
And penury alone his vigil keeps,
She takes her way to where the cottage low
Lies buried in a mass of drifted snow,
And there, depositing her generous boon,
Glides silently away beneath the moon;
Leaving its inmates in amazement deep,
Too happy to enjoy, or wish for sleep;
While she retires, far from their grateful lays,
Well pleased, if good is done, to lose the praise.

THE SHOUT OF VICTORY.

What means that shout, so wild and high,
From the dark deep ocean's side?
And why that crash?—and why that cry
From the waves of the tumbling tide?

Does it hail the approach of some proud bark,
Majestic amid the deep;
And, white as the swan, o'er the billows dark
Bearing down with graceful sweep?

And is she laden with jewels and gold
From far, far distant lands?
And does she bear what cannot be sold,
Free hearts and manly hands?

And is that cloud which darkens the sky
The smoke of the beacon fire,
Which blazes upon the sea-rock high
Like a tall and beautiful spire?

Ah no!—That shout was the victor's shout,
It rose o'er the groans of death,
As the hope of life with a shriek went out,
From the gallant ship sinking beneath.

That curling cloud which ascends to the heaven
Is the smoke of the stately wreck; [riven,
And that crash which arose, as if mountains were
Was the sound of her bursting deck.

And the smile which you meet in every eye
Is not for friends return'd,
But the savage joy of an enemy
Over foes in the deep inurn'd.

They think not, while dashing along the dark
Where the pride of the ocean lies low, [waves,
That, though they may exult o'er their deep-sea
The tears of their kindred must flow: [graves.

They think not that orphans, and widows, and
mothers,
Bereft of their hope and their trust,
Like the tree that is broke, or the floweret that
withers,
Are shedding their sweets on the dust!

Oh! hasten, we pray thee, Great Father of Good,
The time when the sword shall corrode in its sheath;
When the spear shall be sharpen'd for pruning [of wood,
And men cease to rejoice at destruction and death.

SONG TO THE RISING SUN.

Let the sluggard sleep
On his down bed deep;
But I would not repose
While each opening rose
The dews of the morning steep.

The sun is up: in the eastern sky
He is filling his urn of light.
No grief is seen in his fiery eye,
For the sorrows he saw in his flight:
He tells no tale of the woes and the crimes,
Or the groans which he heard in other climes;
Nor does he drop, on his bright return,
A single tear of sorrow,
For the eyes which met him yestermorn
Quench'd long before the morrow:
No!—he wakes his joyous birds to sing,
And he opens his flowers to bloom;
And from all he has seen of suffering,
He brings no shade of gloom.
Let the sluggard sleep, &c.

The sun is up: o'er the eastern lawn
He rises as pure and as bright

As he first arose, when his primal dawn
Put the shadows of Chaos to flight.
Nor years, nor tears have left a mark
On his brow, which shone on the lonely ark.
He hath survived, in that azure sky,
The wrecks of a perish'd world:
He saw its hosts in the deep flood die,
And its cities to ruin hurl'd;
And he saw a phœnix-world arise
From the grasp of the whelming waves,
And forests springing beneath his eyes
From the mud which had cover'd their graves.
Let the sluggard sleep, &c.

The sun is up: with a changeless brow
He looks on a world of change;
He hath seen proud nations arise, and now
Their very names grow strange.
He hath seen cities sapp'd by the sea-waves' sweep,
And islands arise from the fathomless deep;
He hath seen strong towers, by a nation's strength,
And a nation's wealth cemented,
Fall tumbling down in a ruinous length
Of rubbish, unlamented.
He hath seen tall temples raised to his name,
And his priests come forth at morn;
But their orisons pleased not the god of flame,
For he pass'd them by in scorn.
Let the sluggard sleep, &c.

The sun is up: he hath heard the song
From Memnon's stony heart;

And he hath survived that worship long,
And mock'd the sculptor's art.
He hath seen the towers of Tadmor grow less,
He hath smiled on the fall of Persepolis;
He saw them wax, and day after day
He shone upon them as he pass'd;
He saw them wane and vanish away,
And their sites are disputed at last.
He hath wanton'd with flowers on Assyria's plain,
He hath gazed on her idols august;
He hath look'd on the glory of Nimrod's reign,
And on Nineveh stretch'd in the dust.
Let the sluggard sleep, &c.

The sun is up: the glories of Greece
He hath witness'd—the lovely, the free;
He hath warm'd the hearts of her patriots in peace,
And he shone on the pride of Thermopylæ.
He hath witness'd her sages waiting for night,*
To consult by the stars or the pale moonlight;
But he hath shone till her wisdom was gone,
And her battlements levell'd low:
Till slavery sat upon Marathon,
And slaves upon Sunium's brow;
Where the wisest and bravest were born
He hath seen, as he sped on his way,
The fool and the coward sit and mourn
Like children when cross'd in their play.
Let the sluggard sleep, &c.

* * * *

* The *Areopagus*, an Athenian tribunal, which met in the open air by night.

He saw proud Carthage in glory arise,
And rival the mightiest in fame;
He saw her again, and she rose to the skies
In a volume of lava and flame—
While her victor, as thousands around him expired,
Wept over the city his fury had fired.
He hath seen the eagle which floated there,
Plumed with destruction, insultingly skim,
Majestic and high in the death-fire's glare,
With a bloody flight over all but him.
He hath seen him fall like the powerless moth,
And low in the dust he hath seen him lie—
Trampled upon by the Visigoth,
And spurn'd by the Huns of Attila—
Till the tenantless hall, and the bloody home,
Was all that remain'd of the glory of Rome.
Let the sluggard sleep, &c.

The sun is up—to enlighten each part—
But through the long ages of his career,
Of all which lightens or brightens the heart,
How little, alas! hath he look'd upon here!
He saw the temple of Salem arise,
And the wonder of Babylon ascend to the skies;
And the sights which he looks upon, day by day,
Are cheeks growing pale, and eyes growing dim,
Bright visions eclipsed, and hopes swept away,
And families scatter'd in ruin, like them!
Since all is change which his fiery eye
Hath look'd upon from the day of his birth,
Let us fix our hearts upon hopes more high,
And look no more for rest upon earth.

CHOLERA.

From Indian groves on the wings of the blast,
The demon of Death hath approach'd us at last,
Making empty the halls of Old Albion's homes,
And saddening our hearts, and peopling our tombs.
And who shall repell the invader, and save
The pride of our land from the grasp of the grave?
Shall the heroes who saved her, when danger was near,
With the edge of the sword and the point of the spear,
Again rally round the loved land of their birth,
And save her again from the scourge of the earth?

Ah, no! our brave youths, who, 'mid battle and flame,
Shouted "victory or death," with undaunted acclaim,
Subdued by that champion, grow nerveless and pale,
And lay down their courage, their weapons, their mail!
Like the weakest, the vilest, the meanest of men,
They fall down before him, and rise not again!
But one weapon is ours, which the weakest can wield,
Till the stubborn conqu'ror be driven from the field—
And joy re-illumine his walks of dispair:
That weapon is ardent and holiest Prayer.

Infant! pray with thine infantine tongue:
For dear unto God are the prayers of the young.

Mother! pray—while yet thou canst press
The infant who smiles at a mother's caress.
Father! pray—while thy hand may provide
For the blossoms that brighten thy own fireside.
Maiden! pray—ere the pestilence' breath
Hath wither'd thy charms to the paleness of death.
Lover! pray—ere the soft cheek fade,
And the heart which returns thy affection be dead.

Sages and patriots, whose courage and worth
Have been freely bestow'd on the land of your birth—
By the love which you bear to your country, [implore
The mercy of HIM whom the wisest adore.
Churchman and statesman, councillor and king,
Join in a penitent offering;
High and low, young and old,
Strong and weak, fearful and bold,
Join your voices with one accord,
And lift your humbled hearts to the Lord—
That HE who to Abram bow'd down his ear,
The united cry of a nation may hear;
And send forth his angels that fiend to enchain,
Who drinks up the vitals of nations like rain.

HYMNS OF THE CHURCH-YARD—I.

AH, me! this is a sad and silent city;
Let me walk softly o'er it, and survey
Its grassy streets, with melancholy pity! [play?
Where are its children? where their gleesome
Alas! their cradled rest is cold and deep,
And slimy worms watch o'er them as they sleep!

This is pale beauty's bourn: but where the beautiful
Whom I have seen come forth at evening hours,
Leading their aged friends, with feelings dutiful,
Amid the wreaths of spring, to gather flowers?
Alas! no flowers are here, but flowers of death;
And those who once were sweetest sleep beneath.

This is a populous place: but where the bustling—
The crowded buyers of the noisy mart—
The lookers-on—the showy garments rustling—
The money-changers—and the men of art?
Business, alas! hath stopp'd in mid career,
And none are anxious to resume it here.

This is the home of grandeur: where are they—
The rich the great, the glorious, and the wise?
Where are the trappings of the proud, the gay—
The gaudy guise of human butterflies?
Alas! all lowly lies each lofty brow,
And the green sod dizens their beauty now.

This is a place of refuge and repose:
Where are the poor—the old—the weary wight—
The scorn'd—the humble—and the man of woes—
Who wept for morn, and sigh'd again for night?
Their sighs at last have ceased, and here they sleep,
Beside their scorners, and forget they weep.

This is a place of gloom: where are the gloomy?
The gloomy are not citizens of death.
Approach and look: where the long grass is plummy,
See them above! they are not found beneath—

For these low denizens, with artful wiles,
Nature, in flowers, contrives her mimic smiles.

This is a place of sorrow: friends have met,
And mingled tears o'er those who answer'd not:
And where are they whose eyelids then were wet?
Alas! their griefs, their tears are all forgot;
They, too, are landed in this silent city,
Where there is neither love, nor tears, nor pity.

This is a place of fear: the firmest eye
Hath quail'd to see its shadowy dreariness;
But Christian hope, and heavenly prospects high,
And earthly cares, and nature's weariness,
Have made the timid pilgrim cease to fear,
And long to end his painful journey here.

HYMNS OF THE CHURCH-YARD—II.

Again within thy precincts, Death,
With solemn step I tread,
To gaze upon the turf beneath,
Which hides th' unrecorded dead.

I came not here to pry and pore
O'er monument or bust;
But with soft sadness to explore
The graves of those called "vulgar dust."

Each marble has its bard to praise,
And pour the ready tear;

But who, alas! will waste their lays,
Or weep above the poor man's bier?

Yet hearts as firm as ever beat,
And warm as ever burn'd,
And feelings pure as aught we meet,
Have been, without a stone, inurn'd.

And since no bard will deign to sing
Of names so little known,
Or tell their tales of suffering—
The humble task shall be my own.

Here lies a grave, which tear nor sigh
Hath ever fann'd or wet;
Yet never dust, from human eye,
Better deserved that unpaid debt.

It is an orphan's place of rest,
Who found no rest below,
Till the cold sod her soft cheek press'd,
To terminate a scene of woe.

Sad was the day her mother died—
Leaving that only child,
Who erst had been her staff and pride—
A stranger on life's thorny wild.

She was a kind and duteous girl,
And, though her frame was weak,
Had toil'd and watch'd through pain and peril,
For her old bed-rid mother's sake.

But who could gaze upon that streak,
  Like sunlight upon snow,
Which gently tinged her maiden cheek,
  Or on her white and spotless brow,

Or who upon her deep blue eye
  Could for a moment look—
Nor read an early destiny,
  Written in that mysterious book;

Yet she had hours of happiness
  When a fond mother's prayer,
And a fond mother's faint caress,
  Had banish'd earthly care.

But, ah! that friend—the last the best,
  "By pain and sorrow worn,"
Took refuge in this place of rest,
  And left her only child to mourn:

And from that day her swimming eye,
  In languid beauty shone
On the deep azure of the sky,
  Where one by one her friends had gone.

And still by yon low grave her tears
  Of loneliness would gush;
While thoughts which swept o'er bygone years,
  Crimson'd her cheek with rosy flush.

It was not health's bright hue that rose—
  Too soon it pass'd away—

It was the hectic beam which glows
The beacon fire of slow decay.

Her's was a grief that pass'd not by—
A grief that murmur'd not;
It rose with the corrosive sigh,
Yet breath'd contentment with her lot.

And duly at the close of day,
She sought the silent shade—
In solitude to weep and pray,
And ponder on the lowly dead.

And oft upon the breeze of eve,
She thought her mother's voice
Whisper'd, "My Mary, do not grieve:
God calls your spirit to rejoice."

And then a fresher, warmer gush
Of feeling, to her eye
Brought the big tears with quicker rush,
And an intenser sympathy.

Patient as martyr, though so young,
Sickness and pain she suffer'd;
No murmuring word escaped her tongue,
And no complaint she ever utter'd.

Her eye had caught a glimpse of heaven—
Her Saviour from on high—
Had sent a sunbeam to enliven
Death's gloomy vale of mystery.

Poets have sung of beauty's bower,
And love-struck beauty sighing;
But they have felt its fullest power,
Who have beheld such beauty dying.

The ruby lip's expiring red—
The pale but placid cheek,
Where the faint roses sweetly fade,
The onyx brow composed and meek.

The softness of the seraph eyes,
Still dewy, but not wet;
And pure as heaven's blue bending skies—
Beauty like this we ne'er forget!

And such adorn'd the orphan's face,
Who now lies slumb'ring here;
Whose eye was closed in death's embrace,
Without a single sigh or tear.

By stranger hands, her beauteous clay
Was to the dust consign'd;
No friend was there her name to say,
Or load with sighs the passing wind.

But what though neither sigh nor tear
Was given to soothe her rest;
If closing here her brief career,
She went to dwell among the blest!

BAPTISM.

Hush thee sweet child !—these drops, whose fall
  Awoke thy little cry,
Were meant to bless, and not appal,
  Thy soft blue dreaming eye.

Thou little know'st the gift bestow'd,
  Else smiles, instead of tears;
And love and gratitude to God,
  Had been instead of fears.

Yet we, who boast a mightier mind,
  Dark mysteries to see,
To heavenly blessings are as blind,
  Sweet innocent, as thee !

Although from heaven no holy dove
  Descends upon thy head,
As on the Lord of life and love,
  Where Jordan's waters spread ;—

May He who erst in Jordan's stream
  Received that sacred rite,
Pour on thy infant soul a beam
  Of pure redeeming light:

And may thy whisper'd earthly name
  To heavenly courts arise;
And in God's golden book of fame
  Be read by angel-eyes.

And may the prayers by mortals pour'd
For thee, sweet bud of earth!
In Heaven's immutable record
Attest thy second birth.

Now thou art pleased!—and may thy brow
For ever wear that smile;
And may thy heart be free, as now,
From sorrow and from guile.

With thee, in growth, may wisdom grow,
And on that soul of thine
May heavenly consolation flow
To bliss thy life's decline.

And when at last thy race is run,
And Nature sinks, oppress'd,
May the Eternal Sire and Son
Welcome thee to thy rest.

SABBATH EVENING SONG.

'Tis Sabbath! over the sky,
All sounds of earth are still,
Save the wild-bee's hum, and the lapwing's cry,
And the little bird's song on the hill;
And the vapoury clouds hang motionless there,
As if they, too, had caught the spirit of prayer:
And all things full of the Deity shine—
Oh! who would not think upon things divine?

'Tis Sabbath! over the earth,
There is magic in the hour;
Psalms arise from every hearth,
And over each heart have power—
And the holy melody ascends
To a world where Sabbath never ends;
And angels will smile, as fresh garlands they twine
For those who are thinking of things divine.

'Tis Sabbath! over the sea
The full orb'd moon walks bright,
Holding in chains of mystery
Its restless and angry might,
And writing in silvery words on the wave
The mercies of Him who is mighty to save,
And leading the sailor, with beam benign,
To look upward, and think upon things divine.

'Tis Sabbath! and yet the heart
Is weak, and will wander astray,
Though the earth, and the sea, and the sky take a part
In calling our spirits to pray;
And the victim of grief still will think of his woes,
Forgetting the hand which can give him repose:
Yet, Lord, at thy smile we will cease to repine—
Illumine our souls by thy wisdom divine.

THANKS TO GOD FOR PATIENCE TO BEAR AFFLICTION.

O God of Glory! thou hast treasured up
For me my little portion of distress,
But with each draught—in every bitter cup
Thy hand hath mix'd—to make its sourness less—
Some cordial drop, for which thy name I bless,
And offer up my mite of thankfulness.

Thou hast chastised my frame with dire disease,
Long, obdurate, and painful; and thy hand
Hath wrung cold sweat-drops from my brow: for these
I thank thee too. Though pangs at thy com-[mand
Have compass'd me about, still, with the blow,
Patience sustain'd my soul amid its woe.

WARNINGS OF DEATH IN EVERY THING.

Poets have sung of music's melting breath
Warning the pious man, at dead of night,
Of thy approach grim king, unwelcome Death!
Whose arrows flee in darkness and in light.
And oft the owlet, with unsocial scream,
Hath made the soundest sleeper quickly start,
Who, wakening, pale and shivering from his dream,
Feels the dread warning curdle at his heart.

And oft at midnight's stirless hour of dread
The sheeted phantom, or the shadowy wraith,
Are said to pace the room with noiseless tread,
As heralds of their king, grim-visaged Death.

But granting that each legend were a truth—
That all the stories which have yet been told
By credulous age, to frighten timid youth,
Were as veracious as the mountains old—
These dark foreboding messengers proclaim
No new discovery—tell no wondrous tale:
Ages and elements have taught the same
In plainer language than the phantom pale.

Ah, who can doubt the truth! since all beneath
Tells us of stern and uncompounding Death.
Go look abroad upon the smiling earth,
Behold the violet's bloom, the daisy's birth—
Are they not fair as thee? Go look again.
And see them wither'd from the frozen plain.
Look on the louring clouds and murky air,
Lurks not the spirit of contagion there?
The low damp breeze, with pestilential breath,
Whispers "Beware! I sow the seeds of death!"
Go to the revel—look upon the ball,
The music and the songs which gladden all,
Though each musician had a siren's breath,
Are voices from the grave, and tell of Death.

If still you doubt, then leave the earth with me,
And con the sterner morals of the sea,

Behold in awful swell the mountain wave,
And hear Death's genius from that tumbling grave,
While arching with white foam the dark abyss,
His dreadful warnings to your senses hiss;
And, to enforce the appalling voice with deeds,
Behold your brethren dash'd ashore like weeds—
Though erst as full of life and strength as you:
And what is done, he oft again shall do!

Turn from the deep, where his dread voice is loud,
Where daily, hourly, he spreads forth a shroud
Upon the whirlpool's breast of dancing foam:
Flee from these terrors to thy peaceful home,
And there, even there, the demon will attend,
His whispers with your happiest hours to blend.
Your very pride hath given the grisly seer
A power to prophecy his own career—
There Genius, wedded to laborious Art,
Hath toil'd to shape his warning to your heart.

Behold the lofty gallery's pictured wall,
And see the smiling lip—the changeless eye—
Pale brow—pure cheek—athletic form—and all
The grave resigns to art of ancestry,
And say, Does not the pantomime of death
Press solemnly and deep these words of fear—
"Poor fleeting race, who perish with each breath,
Soon all your charms shall only sadden here."

WINTER AND SPRING.—MARCH 1831.

'Twas the time of the year when the forest tree
Is expanding its buds to the humming bee;
'Twas the hour of the day when the purpling sky
Grows doubly sweet to the poet's eye—
When, coy as the virgin who shuns to be seen,
A beautiful damsel bedizen'd with green,
As the sweet sunbeams on the pale boughs play'd,
Walk'd trippingly down the old promenade:
A necklace of buds on her fair breast hung,
And a wordless music flow'd from her tongue,
And a coronal, made of the snowdrops bright,
Danced on her brow so enchantingly white.
Her slippers of mountain-daisies were made,
Which glow'd with a tinge of the purest red;
And light was her step, as she wantonly stray'd
In the sheltering reach of the old trees' shade.

Stalking alone on the opposite side,
Where the north wind blew o'er a desert wide,
A form of a different kind was seen:
His gait was unsteady, but haughty his mien.
To his fur-trimm'd robes the snow-flakes clung,
And icicles pure from his grey locks hung:
He appear'd like a giant, in stature and form,
And the cast of his brow was the frown of the storm,
Which heavily falls on the cold heart-string—
The two were the Spirits of Winter and Spring!

As Winter came on, with a dedolent air,
His eye caught a glimpse of the beautiful fair;
The sheen of the robes which the damsel had worn,
That evening appear'd to inflate him with scorn,
And, stopping at once the high tramp of his foot,
He address'd her in haste with this angry salute:
"Whence hast thou come? like a glittering toy,
Whose very existence my frown will destroy!
How dar'st thou, gay wanton, thy flowerets to twine, [mine?
On the hills I have conquer'd—the vales which are
Vain fool! dost thou think that thy aspect so fair
Could tempt me for once an invader to spare?
No! hence—I have warn'd thee. I warn thee, go hence—
If thou stay'st, it shall be at thy proper expense!"

Thus spoke he; and she, with a smile in her eye,
To his still growing wrath made a gentle reply:
"I come from the land where the orient palm
Spreads softly and sweetly its leaves in the calm;
Where the streams have no voice as they glide to the deep, [asleep!
Which, embracing the shadows of earth, falls
From thence did I come with the swallows, to soar
Over inland and ocean, from shore unto shore;
And here have I paused in this isle of the seas,
To rest me awhile, and then fly with the breeze!"

Thus spoke she; and Winter stood frowning the while;
But she met every frown of his brow with a smile,

Till anger and wrath to affection gave place,
And the churl began to look pleased in her face:
And slowly the old surly chief and the maid,
Together retired to the forest for shade;
But the moment he saw her set foot in the grove,
Old Winter grew squeamish, and sicken'd of love.
Too late he repented approaching her charms,
And, frowning again, he expired in her arms;
And gaily she smiled as she there laid him down,
For she won with a smile what he lost with a frown.

SONNET ON THE DEPARTURE OF THE YEAR 1832.

Thus thou expirest, thou momentous year—
Thy last, last vital moments are departing,
And many a heart o'er thy sad lapse is smarting:
Yet not for thee falls the big burning tear;
But for the friends, than life itself more dear,
Whom thou has swept away, these drops are starting.
Bright forms which bounded lightly at thy birth—
Eyes which with love and hope were sparkling clear—
Have left an empty seat on many a hearth,
And gone where neither hope nor love can cheer:
They "take no note of time;" worms are their guests!
And thy successor, who now dimly starts
Upon us from eternity, fresh feasts
Shall give these reptiles, of fresh human hearts!

ADDRESS TO TIME—AUGUST 1836.

Gray monarch of decay!
  Stern conqueror of kings!
Beneath whose all unbounded sway,
The mightiest nations melt away,
  And are forgotten things!
Oh! spare but one poor gift to me,
And I resign the rest to thee!

If aught of manly grace,
  Or youthful bloom be mine,
Take from thy subject's form and face,
Each faintly marked and fading trace,
  Stern spoiler, they are thine;
But dip not thy relentless dart
In the deep fountain of my heart!

Take health, as thou before
  Has taken, from my frame;
Take all the little treasured store,
Which memory holds, of hard-earn'd lore,
  For these are thine to claim;
But leave me still the power to scan,
Kindly the woes of suffering man!

If tyranny must sting
  My soul to sternness here,
And from my heart, by torture, wring
Those gentle sympathies, which spring
  Where man to man is dear;

Then bait me with the sons of pride—
By them be all my firmness tried!

But ne'er by guile or woe,
That tender organ tear,
Which o'er the weak—the fall'n—the low—
Vibrates with sympathetic glow—
Those slender springlets spare;
And if denied the means to heal,
Still let me have the power to feel!

SCRAPS—JULY 1831.

THERE is no word to those who roam,
So sweet, so musical, as "Home;"
The sound of its endearing name,
Thrills with delight the wand'rer's frame.
Whether 'mid Zembla's rocks of ice,
Or Syria's flowery paradise;
Whether beneath a brighter sky,
Or darker than his own, his sigh
Is for that spot which love endears,
With mutual smiles and mutual tears!
What, then, must be the thoughts of those
To whom the world gives no repose?
For whom, wherever they may roam,
Time hath no hopes, and earth no home!
They may be bless'd, for God prepares
A home, which nought but goodness shares;
And those who scorn not his command,
May journey to that happy land!

Oh! could the glance of mortal eye
Pierce to those mansions of the sky,
The king would leave his glittering throne—
From tricks the statesman would begone—
The miser would no longer pore
Upon, or count, his precious store—
The lover would forsake his love,
To earth each heart would faithless prove;
And all would turn their eyes to where
These blessed homes they yet might share—
To catch the rapturous rays which fall
Profusely from the crystal wall
Of the Jerusalem above,
Where all is harmony and love!

* * * *

Then envy not, ye homeless few,
The greatest of the great: for you
The hand which spread the skies abroad,
Even He who pleads our cause with God,
Who was himself to sorrow bred,
And had not where to lay his head,
Is forming in the courts of light,
Mansions for ever fair and bright—
Mansions from whose eternal walls
No evening shadow ever falls;
For time, unmeasured by the sun,
Shall there in endless ages run!

These mansions, boundless though they seem,
With those who had no homes shall teem:

Then cease, ye homeless few, to grieve,
Your Saviour's call of love receive ;
Obey his will in earthly things ;
Expire, and be eternal kings!

Creation hath no single spot,
Gloomy or bright, where God is not.
His essence fills the vital air,
  Upon the deep it flies abroad.
Descend to hell, and He is there—
  Ascend to heaven, 'tis His abode.
With morning beams His throne He makes
  In the beatitude of light ;
And then for His pavilion takes
  The shadows of the gloomy night :
All, all in ocean, earth, or sky,
Is ever present to His eye.
His omnipresence doth behold
  The slightest motion, act, or thought
Which stirs or moves our mortal mould—
  The most minute—the most remote.
The insect sporting on the breeze—
The monster of the northern seas—
With every tribe which intervenes
Betwixt these vast and far extremes—
By Him are every moment seen—
  By Him are fed!

A SPRING SONG—1834.

THERE is a concert in the trees—
  There is a concert on the hill—
There's melody in every breeze,
  And music in the murmuring rill.
  The shower is past, the winds are still,
The fields are green, the flowerets spring,
  The birds, and bees, and beetles fill,
The air with harmony, and fling
  The rosied moisture of the leaves
In frolic flight from wing to wing,
  Fretting the spider as he weaves
His airy web from bough to bough;
  In vain the little artist grieves
Their joy in his destruction now.

Alas! that in a scene so fair
  The meanest being e'er should feel
The gloomy shadow of despair,
  Or sorrow o'er his bosom steal.
  But in a world where woe is real,
Each rank in life, and every day,
  Must pain and suffering reveal,
And wretched mourners in decay:
  When nations smile o'er battles won—
When banners wave, and streamers play,
  The lonely mother mourns her son
Left lifeless on the bloody clay;
  And the poor widow all undone,
Sees the wild revel with dismay.

Even in the happiest scenes of earth,
When swell'd the bridal song on high—
When every voice was tuned to mirth
And joy was shot from eye to eye,
I've heard a sadly stifled sigh;
And 'mid the garlands rich and fair
I've seen a cheek, which once could vie
In beauty with the fairest there,
Grown deadly pale, although a smile
Was worn above to cloak despair:
Poor maid! it was a hapless wile
Of long conceal'd and hopeless love,
To hide a heart which broke the while
With pangs no lighter heart could prove.

The joyous spring, and summer gay,
With perfumed gifts together meet,
And from the rosy lips of May
Breathe music soft, and odours sweet:
And still my eyes delay my feet
To gaze upon the earth and heaven,
And hear the happy birds repeat
Their anthems to the coming even:
Yet is my pleasure incomplete—
I grieve to think how few are given
To feel the pleasures I possess,
While thousand hearts, by sorrow riven,
Must pine in utter loneliness,
Or be to desperation driven.

Oh! could we find some happy land,
Some Eden of the deep blue sea,

By gentle breezes only fann'd,
  Upon whose soil, from sorrow free,
  Grew only pure felicity;
Who would not brave the stormiest main
  Within that blessful isle, to be
Exempt from sight or sense of pain?
  There is a land we cannot see
Whose joys no pen can e'er pourtray,
  And yet, so narrow is the road,
From it our spirits ever stray.
  Shed light upon that path, O God!
And lead us in the appointed way.

There only, joy shall be complete,
  More high than mortal thoughts can reach,
For there the just and good shall meet
  Pure in affection, thought, and speech;
  No jealousy shall make a breach,
Nor pain their pleasure e'er alloy—
  There sunny streams of gladness stretch,
And there the very air is joy.
  There shall the faithful, who relied
On faithless love, till life would cloy,
  And those who sorrow'd till they died,
O'er earthly pain, and earthly woe,
  See pleasure, like a whelming tide,
From an unbounded ocean flow.

RESIGNATION.

'Tis wise in mortals who have been
By heavenly mercy blest,
When days of sorrow come at last,
To own God's pleasure best.
And though 'tis hard with joy to part,
Yet may the power be mine,
What Heaven demands, all patiently
And calmly to resign.

The sweetest treasure life affords
On earth, is hope and health—
For hope is purest happiness,
And health the greatest wealth.
But hope, and health, and happiness
Are now no longer mine,
Lord, help me, hope and health, and all,
With patience to resign.

THE POETICAL PREACHER.—No. I.

"Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Mat. xi. 28.

Art thou a pilgrim, old and poor,
Way-worn upon life's thorny road,
Whose limbs must falter, hour by hour,
Beneath affliction's heavy load?
To thee, the voice of God address'd,
Invites to an eternal rest.

Or art thou, in life's early stage,
  Worn down by pain and dire disease,
'Till all the infirmities of age
  Cluster around thy trembling knees?
Sigh not, nor mourn, for thou art press'd
To come and have eternal rest.

Or art thou one whose hopes have been
  On earthly evanescence built,
Whose schemes in disappointment keen
  Have terminated, and in guilt?
With penitential thoughts impress'd,
Come and receive eternal rest.

Or art thou mourning o'er the dead—
  Some dearly loved, and valued friend,
By early death, untimely laid
  Where him thou mayest no more attend?
O cease to grieve! God's will is best—
Believe, and thou shalt yet have rest.

Whate'er thou be, whoe'er thou art,
  In weariness, and want, and woe,
Give to the Lord an humble heart,
  Ask and believe—He will bestow;
For all who mourn, with cares oppress'd,
  May claim from Him the promis'd rest.

POETICAL PREACHER.—No. II.

"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37.

While Fortune smiles, and Plenty pours
Her favours o'er thy lot,
Where'er thou go'st, the opening doors
Of palace and of cot
Will welcome thee, to rest and share
Whate'er they can afford;
And ready hands will soon prepare
The downy couch, and sumptuous board.

But if pale poverty should shed
Its cold benumbing snows
Upon thy weary heart and head,
These doors at once will close;
For kindness here is only won
By wealth—which wants it not;
While all would shun the wretch undone
As only fit to be forgot.

But hark! a voice of mercy calls—
It is a Saviour's voice;
He woos the poor to heavenly halls,
Where all that dwell rejoice.
The meanest wretch who here may roam
May come without a doubt,
And find a glorious welcome home:
God will not cast the wretched out.

POETICAL PREACHER.—No. III.

"I loathe it—I would not live alway.—Job vii. 16."

In the spring-time of life, when the sunshine of joy
And the purple of health are combined on the cheek;
When the sweet bud of childhood unfolds in the boy,
When the passions are warm, and the judgment is weak,
Then all we behold is invested with bliss—
Delighted we gaze on the ocean and sky;
Nor wish for a paradise purer than this—
It is then that we tremble to think we must die.
To friendship and love we have plighted our faith,
And our hearts in the lap of enjoyment are laid,
Ere the sorrows of life, or the darkness of death,
Our friends have destroyed, or our hopes have betray'd;
But when toss'd by the storm, in the offing of years,
The scenes which were lovely seem lovely no more:
It is then that the voyager, 'mid sorrows and fears,
Feels pleased that the ocean of life hath a shore.
Life's bloom, like the May-thorn's foliage, deceives—
In summer the pride of the forest and plain;
But autumn divests it of fragrance and leaves,
And nought but the fruit and the prickles remain.
The fruit of existence is virtue and truth,
And happy is he in whose bosom they grow;
For they shall survive the gay foliage of youth,
And soothe the sad prickles of age and of woe:

For, whate'er we may think of the pains that are past,
Or dream of the gay-golden prospects to come,
The pleasures of life will decline to the last,
And its cares will increase as we march to the tomb.
Even those who have reached to the margin of time,
And worn all the blessings life gave them to wear,
Whether soaring in goodness, or sinking in crime,
Would shrink from eternal mortality here.
Yet, fear not the pressure of age or of pain,
Nor, for sorrows behind thee, disconsolate mourn:
Though life may be dark, yet it is not in vain,
And eternity's dawn shall its ending adorn.
Though the bright sun of hope on the valley of tears
May have set, in its brightness no more to arise,
We are bless'd, if the Day-Star of Mercy appears
To illumine our path through its gloom to the skies.
And in this let our hearts still rejoice and be glad,
Though surrounded with suff'rings o'er which we must grieve,
That we shall not live always, nor always be sad;
For the scene is a scene which we shortly must leave.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

'Twas early morn, and dawning day
Had scarcely yet begun to shine,*

* The description given here accords best with what is to be found in the xx. Chap. of St. John.

Although a faintly struggling ray
Had marked the dim horizon's line,
When through the still remaining gloom
A female form was seen to stray:
She sought alone her Saviour's tomb—
She went to weep where Jesus lay.
With hurried step, and look forlorn,
Along the garden path she moved,
Where late in silent grief was borne
That Master she so dearly loved.
With spices and with myrrh she came,
His sacred body to embalm;
And once again to name his name
In sorrow's sad and sick'ning qualm:
But lo! the tomb was burst!—the stone
Which barr'd its gate was backward roll'd;
The great—the glorious Dead, was gone!
Of him, the grave had lost its hold.
A moment, with suspended breath,
That faithful mourner stood to gaze
Upon the late abode of death
Thrown open to the morning rays;
Then hurriedly she went to call
Her Saviour's followers, to explore
That empty cave, and corseless pall,
Where his remains were found no more.
They came and found his funeral dress
Along the cold sepulchre strown,
But, with unspeakable distress,
They saw not him, for he was gone.
Their souls were dark, their faith was weak:
They dream'd not that their Lord could rise

To burst the bands of death, and break
  Through all a passage to the skies!
And soon the sad disciples left
  That melancholy spot, to mourn
Their loss—of Him they loved bereft:
  They knew not that he should return.
But she who first appeared there,
  Lingering—her soul's deep anguish pour'd
Before the ransack'd sepulchre
  Which lately held her blessed Lord.
And down upon her knees she bent,
  And turned within her streaming eyes
To give her yearning heart full vent,
  When lo! a vision from the skies
Astonished her bewilder'd sight!
  She saw two forms, whose garments shone,
Like sun-illumined snow—so bright
  They scarcely could be look'd upon:
Yet mild were their majestic faces,
  And mild their eyes of heavenly blue,
Which beam'd with more than mortal graces—
  Dazzling, yet fascinating too;
And when they sweetly smiled and spoke,
  And ask'd the cause of Mary's tears,
Their words, like heavenly music, broke
  From the dim cavern on her ears.
Abash'd by such dread charms, she turn'd
  Aside her sad and drooping head;
But still her heart in sorrow yearn'd
  To know where she might find the dead.

She turn'd her round: who meets she there?
Beaming with looks of tenderness,
An eye more bright, a face more fair
Than those she left within, were His!
Yet seemed He mortal—for His hand
Displayed a deep impurpled wound;
And sure in heaven's eternal band
No semblance of a scar is found.
But never mortal form before
Seem'd half so glorious to her eye
As His whose brow so kindly wore
Compassion with its majesty.
He saw her weep, and question'd why,
But she mistook his words—though clear—
And answered, with a burning sigh,
"I seek for one who is not here.
Rabboni, pray thee, tell me where
The body of the Lord is laid,
That I may to the spot repair,
And weep once more above the dead!"
"Mary!"—He said: that tender tone
In one short moment brought to mind
A friend whom she before had known—
A friend benevolent and kind;
And in her gladness at the sight,
Her risen Saviour she had press'd:
Then stooping down, in humble plight,
His very feet with rapture kiss'd.
But he forbade that fond embrace,
Yet offer'd no austere rebuke;
For mercy mantled o'er his face,
And mercy beam'd in every look.

"Touch me not yet," he said; "but bend
Thy steps to where my brethren pine;
Say that their Lord shall soon ascend
Up to their Father, and to mine."

The Saviour, robed in rays of light,
Vanished from her still longing eyes;
And Mary, fluttering with delight,
Went forth his followers to surprise.

Yet once again from heaven he came,
That mourning brotherhood to bless,
Who, reckless of contempt and shame,
Had followed him in faithfulness.
Still, of the Twelve, one had not seen
His Saviour since from death he rose;
For he before had absent been
And doubts and fears still round him close.
And yet once more when silent night
Hung heavy o'er the slumbering land,
That Saviour burst upon their sight,
And show'd his perforated hand,
And pointed to his pierced side,
That all their doubts, and all their fears,
For ever might be satisfied—
And cheer'd their hearts, and dried their tears.

He open'd, with his dying breath,
A fountain, sinful souls to lave;
He rose and took the sting from death,
And wrench'd the terrors from the grave.

And when at last, 'mid falling stars,
  And suns and moons through darkness driven,
With angel hosts, on fiery cars,
  He comes from the high gates of heaven—
When all the generations gone,
  At the archangel's voice appear,
And, ranged around his Judgment Throne,
  Stand tremblingly their doom to hear,
Who shall not quake with fear to see
  Creation's mighty fabric shake
Before that Man of Galilee
  Who suffer'd once for sinners' sake?

* * * *

OH! LET NO TEAR.

Oh! let no tear
Bedew your eye, to see me die;
  Nor any fear
Disturb your heart, to follow where I fly!

WARNING GIVEN BY THE SETTING SUN—1831.

The tranquil stillness of the evening hour
  Brings to my mind the deeper hush of death;
To me, the breathing zephyrs have a power,
  Which speaks of the last sigh of parting breath:
Even the bright sun, as slow he sinks away,
  Thus writes with his red beam upon the lake:
"Many bright eyes which shone with me, to-day,
  With me, to-morrow, shall no more awake!"

THE PASTOR.

To watch the world's distracted fold,
As with a parent's eye—
To teach the young, and warn the old,
That all on earth must die:
And more than all, to paint, to prove
To the faint gaze of faith,
How Jesus' sacrificial love
Brought life to them from death;
To tame the proud with truths severe—
The vile dissembler's mask
To rend, without respect or fear;
This is the Pastor's task!

To see, despite his toils and cares,
Bold vice triumphant boast—
To deem his vigils and his prayers,
By God and mankind lost;
To feel the everlasting fate
Of sinners on his head;
And tremble, as he scans the weight
Of guilt and judgment dread;
To think they scorn his warning voice,
Whose souls to him are dear—
And court damnation as their choice;
This is the Pastor's fear!

Within the dwellings of the poor
To wait with patient eye,
Mid sufferings which he cannot cure,
Wants he can not supply;

To kneel beside the parent's bed,
Whose children, in despair,
Just hush their wailing cry for bread
To listen to his prayer;
To hear the groans, and see the woes,
Which will not brook relief—
The widow's and the orphan's woes;
This is the Pastor's grief!

Then who would choose a task so sad,
So full of grief and fear?
Has earth no scenes his heart to glad?
No sounds his soul to cheer?
Yes!—holy, happy is his choice,
When sinners round him meet
To listen to his sacred voice,
And all their fears repeat:
The trickling tears, and upturn'd eyes,
Which give their spirits scope,
Promise to him a heavenly prize;—
This is the Pastor's hope!

When some poor wretch, in guilt grown gray,
Touch'd by his warm appeal,
Is taught to think, repent, and pray,
With faith, and love, and zeal:
When he beholds some maiden's tear
Fall o'er the word of God,
And knows her feelings are sincere,
And that from love it flow'd:

Then beats his heart with rapture high!—
If maiden, man, or boy,
Seem'd turn'd from darkness to the sky;
This is the Pastor's joy!

And oh! when time shall pass away—
When earth's proud pomp shall fade;
When God shall burst her burial clay,
And raise her countless dead—
To meet, amid the blest in heaven,
Many to whom he bore
The sacred hope of sins forgiven,
And warn'd to sin no more—
Mortals who pity him!—this is,
For all his labours hard—
Who would not wish to call it his?—
The Pastor's blest reward!

THE LAST FAREWELL.

Fare-thee-well, thou parting spirit!
Dear christian, fare-thee-well!
The glory thou shalt soon inherit
No mortal tongue can tell!

Yet sadly sounds in friendship's ear,
That last adieu of thine:
Ah! who could part with one so dear—
So loved—and not repine?

For those who are most meet for heaven,
On earth we miss the most;
Yet those who long on earth have striven,
Sigh for that peaceful coast.

Then go! sweet saint, resign thy breath:
And He, whose staff and rod
Supports thee in the vale of death,
Shall ever be thy God.

And while we close thy lifeless eye,
And mourn thy vacant clay,
Thy soul shall wing its flight on high,
Beyond the milky way!

Then haste to mansions of the blest;
And blest are those who die
In Jesus; for their bodies rest—
Their spirits scale the sky:

And all their works shall follow them;
And, to their crowns above,
Their King shall add a heavenly gem
For every work of love.

And though we part, 'tis not for aye—
No; brighter hopes remain:
There comes at last a glorious day
When we shall meet again.

Our dust shall mingle in the grave,
Our souls shall meet in heaven;

For, by His love who died to save,
Our sins shall be forgiven.

Then fare-thee-well, thou parting spirit!
Dear christian, fare-thee-well!
The glory thou shalt soon inherit
No mortal tongue can tell!

MY GRANDMOTHER.*

Long years of toil and care,
And pain and poverty have pass'd,
Since last I listen'd to her prayer,
And look'd upon her last—
Yet how she spoke, and how she smiled
Upon me, when a playful child;
The lustre of her eye—
The kind caress—the fond embrace—
The reverence of her placid face—
All in my memory lie
As fresh as they had only been
Bestow'd, and felt, and heard, and seen
Since yesterday went by.

* The individual here alluded to was Annie M'Donald, the "self-taught cottager," a part of whose correspondence, with a memoir, was published by the Rev. J. Brodie in 1832. Her habits, the strongly religious turn of her mind, and her last moments, are described with a greater regard to truth than poetical ornament, in the following verses; and it may be mentioned, that she was the first whom their author had seen leave this world.

Her dress so simply neat—
  Her household tasks so featly done—
Even the old willow-wicker seat
  On which she sat and spun—
The table where her Bible lay,
Open from morn till close of day—
  The standish, and the pen,
With which she noted, as they rose,
Her thoughts upon the joys, the woes,
  The final fate of men,
And sufferings of her Saviour-God—
Each object in her poor abode
  Is visible as them.

Nor are they all forgot—
  The faithful admonitions given,
And glorious hopes which flattered not,
  But led the soul to heaven:
These had been hers, and have been mine
When all beside had ceased to shine—
  When sadness and disease,
And disappointment and suspense,
Had driven youth's fairest fancies hence,
  Short'ning its fleeting lease:
'Twas then these hopes amid the dark,
Just glimmering like an unquench'd spark,
  Dawn'd on me by degrees.

To her they gave a light
  Brighter than sun or star supplied;
And never did they shine more bright
  Than just before she died.

Death's shadow dimm'd her aged eyes,
Gray clouds had clothed the evening skies,
And darkness was abroad;
But still she turn'd her gaze above,
As if the eternal light of love
On her glazed organs glowed;
Like beacon fire at closing even,
Hung out between the earth and heaven,
To guide her soul to God.

And then they brighter grew,
Beaming with everlasting bliss,
As if the eternal world in view
Had wean'd her eyes from this;
And every feature was composed,
As with a placid smile they closed
On those who stood around,
Who felt it was a sin to weep
O'er such a smile, and such a such a sleep,
So peaceful, so profound:
And though they wept, their tears express'd
Joy for her time-worn frame at rest—
Her soul with mercy crown'd.

Her last words, ere she died,
Were, "Friends and daughters, lay me down:
In Jesus bosom let me hide
Your spirits and my own!"
She stretch'd her limbs, composed her arms,
As death had been the prince of charms—
Nor breath'd a sigh or groan:

And then the calm, the heavenly grace
Which fell upon her reverent face!
Wrinkles, than roses blown
Seemed fairer far; the spirit shed
Such beauty, as it upward fled
To the eternal throne!

THE PARTING GIFT.

'Tis not the value of the gift,
As rated in the world's esteem,
Which makes the boon by Friendship left
A thing of such importance seem:
Its worth can ne'er be weigh'd in gold—
Its value never can be told.

It is the feelings which arise,
The recollections which endear,
The memory of those sympathies
Which flow'd forth with the parting tear,
When that last pledge of love was given
Full in the eye of earth and heaven.

The lowliest flower, the simplest leaf,—
Whatever tends to bring to view
The friend who bow'd his head in grief,
And bade his cherish'd friends adieu
To the lorn heart is dearer far
Than all the gold of Istakar.

Yes—those, and those alone, can tell,
Who've felt the heaviness of heart
Which follows that sad word "Farewell,"
When friends, by time endear'd, depart,
How fondly the lone spirit clings
To faithful love's minutest things.

What fixes most the exile's eye,
When wandering in a foreign land;
The lovely vale—the mountain high—
The rock magnificently grand?
Ah, no! it is that little token
Given by a heart, at parting, broken.

He wears it ever in his breast,
He bears it wheresoe'er he goes;
He holds it in his dreams of rest,
He grasps it 'mid his toils and woes;
And vain were Nature's brightest smile,
If it had caught his glance the while.

No more the cataract's roar he hears—
His ear hath caught a sweeter sound;
His kindled eye is blind with tears,
And all is vacancy around:
The home of his sweet infant years,
And those he loved, alone appears.

But happiest they who never heard
The wanderer's farewell ditty sung—

Whose hearts the last low whisper'd word
Of parting friendship never wrung;
Who never have been doom'd to mark
The dead man's bier, or exile's bark.

But men were made to meet and part;
And while we breathe in mortal dust—
Although it tear and rend the heart
In twain, yet part, for once, we must;
For the strong arm of tyrant Death
Will break the firmest earthly faith.

And hearts must bleed, and tears must fall,
And parting gifts again be given,
For this hath been decreed to all
Who breathe beneath the cope of heaven;
But those who meet in that domain
Shall never, never part again.

THE RETURN.

Vainly, in search of happiness,
The soul directs her flight
Where some faint beams of earthly hope
Begem the general night.
Each point which scintillates the gloom
Of this low world, appears
A star of promise; but, alas!
It must be quench'd in tears,

I've follow'd these delusive lights
Too often and too long,
And bless'd the sparkling vanities
Whose lustre led me wrong:
Like crystal spars at distance seen,
They glitter'd on my sight;
But they were cold as icicles,
And brittle, too, as bright.

Yet, like the prodigal, who loved
In distant lands to roam,
My soul went forth in search of them
Far from its native home;
And, like the prodigal, at last,
It spent its little store
To purchase pleasures, which, when touch'd,
Shrunk to return no more;

And even the husks of happiness,
On which the vulgar feed,
Seem'd to my famish'd soul a feast,
Though not for me decreed:
The greedy herd had gulp'd them down,
While I stood gazing by;
Too proud to share their gluttony,
To join their ranks too shy.

And like the lonely prodigal,
When all his wealth was gone,
My soul now looks for happiness
To a Father's love alone.

My dreams were false, and I return
  At last, O Lord, to thee;
Unworthy to be call'd thy son,
  Thy servant let me be.

Send me abroad where'er thou wilt,
  With friends or foes to meet;
But let thy love sustain my heart,
  Thy grace direct my feet.
Let all my pleasures and my hopes
  From thee derive their birth,
But ne'er permit my heart again
  To trust its all to earth.

The humble and the penitent
  We know thou wilt not spurn—
Bless me with true humility,
  And welcome my return.
Oh let thy cheering promises
  Shine on my darkness here,
And those bright hopes, which thou canst give,
  Still dissipate my fear.

A VISION, OF AMBITION.

I HAD a vision; for my eye
  Was giften to behold
A heart whose aspirations high
  Were hid in mortal mould:
Its workings, which no eye could see,
Were seen and visible to me.

The thoughts which he forbore to speak,
I had the power to scan;
Although they glow'd not on the cheek
Of that mysterious man;
For of his heart I felt the heat,
And heard the pulse of passion beat.

In closest intercourse combined,
I knew him from a boy,
And watch'd the progress of his mind,
And mark'd its pain and joy;
Nor did he e'er to me disguise
The feelings hid from other eyes.

He was a youth of humble mien,
And unassuming gait,
Whose form had been right rarely seen
Among the proud or great;
And never did he court their gaze,
Or seem solicitous of praise.

In the deep shadows of a wood,
A lonely life he led—
Shadows which bound in solitude
The home where he was bred;
And in that sacred calm he nursed
Strange dreams and fancies from the first.

His friends were few; for he was poor,
And poverty, he knew,
Was held in scorn by every boor,
And therefore he withdrew,

But not in wrath or hate—heaven knows—
He loved mankind, and mourn'd their woes.

But he had found that faithful love
  Within his humble home,
Which rose all selfishness above,
  And still'd the wish to roam;
His parents twain—a hoary pair
Bending with feeble age—were there.

On him was fix'd with anxious care,
  Their dim and fading eyes;
And morn and even their earnest prayer
  For him was heard to rise:
Like ancient trees, they seem'd to lean
On one still vigorous, young, and green.

For them he braved the summer's heat,
  And braved the winter's blast;
Alternate drench'd with rain and sweat,
  His early life was pass'd;
And he had nought to lure his heart
From those deep shadows to depart.

Yet had ambition early fix'd
  Itself on all he did;
Though from the few with whom he mix'd,
  As said, it had been hid:
And here, too, I could scan its aim,
Although unknown, unscann'd by them.

Though mortal was his sire and mother,
Yet his ambition was,
That God's own Son should call him Brother,
And plead with God his cause,
And raise him to a throne and crown,
From which on kings he should look down.

AUTUMNAL VERSES—1836.

Ye winds that sigh so solemnly
Along the wintry wood,
Ye bear a warning in your voice
To the wicked and the good.

Ye yellow leaves that lie so thick,
And rustle at our feet,
Ye bring a moral to the heart,
Alas! both sad and sweet.

Ambition, in thy glory, look—
Vain Beauty, in thy bloom—
Behold this scene, and humbly brook
An emblem of your doom!

The loftiest bough that lifts its head,
Bedeck'd with foliage fairest,
Must soonest meet the blasts that beat
Its bending twigs the barest;

Its leaves which, in the summer breeze,
Danced lightest to the day,
Now with the lowest lie, and now
Mix in the same decay.

Thus fall the good and beautiful,
Thus fall the proud and high,
And, in the same dark region met,
On the same level lie.

Then go ye faithless blandishments
Which power and pride display;
And go ye smiles of loveliness
Which last but for a day.

Since leaf, and flower, and living thing,
Through Nature's ample range,
Must perish with the years that pass,
Or with the seasons change;

To beauties more unperishing,
And smiles that cannot die,
I now would teach my heart to rise,
And lift my drooping eye.

To those who erst have wash'd their robes
In blood the Saviour shed—
To them, and Him who ransom'd them,
Be all my wishes led.

Those smiles which wither on the cheek,
In this low world of care,

Shall be renew'd and beautified,
And live for ever there.

The blossoms wither'd by the blasts
Which earthward howl and hiss,
Shall be unfolded, gloriously,
In that high world of bliss.

And should my soul descend again
From these bright forms above,
Be their fair images on earth
The objects of my love.

* * * *

THE BENEVOLENCE AND SUFFERINGS OF THE SAVIOUR.

Disciples of that Holy One,
Who died for sinners to atone,
Think on your Lord, and hope not here,
Freedom from sorrow and from fear;
Think not self-sacrificing love,
Unnoticed by the Powers above,
Nor falter in your faith;
Nor deem benevolence in vain,
Though kindness shown to suffering men
Should seem repaid with grief and pain,
Or even with groans and death.

Your Saviour—even the Son of God!—
Spoke peace to men where'er he trod;
Obedient to his Father's will,
Labour'd for their salvation still;
Pitied their woes, and, o'er the grave,
Wept for the dead he came to save:
  He was the widow's prop,
The orphan's stay, the stranger's shield;
And lepers cleansed, and sickness heal'd,
Bespoke His kindness, and reveal'd
  His power with Death to cope.

All power was His; yet was not He,
Though free from sin, from suffering free!
He lived a Man of Woe, and died
With malefactors side by side:
And why should earth to us afford
Enjoyments she denied her Lord?
  While here still let us try,
In midst of suffering and shame,
To praise and bless His holy name,
Who took upon Himself our blame,
  And deign'd for us to die.

SELFISHNESS.

Since first I set a fit on earth—
  And mony a ane I've paidled,
Between auld Cupar toun and Perth,
  Unbridled and unsaddled—

Whare'er I set my waefu' face
Upon the land that bore me,
The sisters, Greed and Selfishness,
Were trottin' aye before me.

Trig active maidens baith appear'd,
And aften I hae seen them
Wi' Justice, an auld cripple carle,
Jog, jogging on between them.

His breeks were threadbare, and the knees
Were worn to perfect tatters;
His coat was plaister'd owre wi' grease,
And dow'd as ony hatter's.

His shoon were weighty wooden clogs,
Through mony a mire they'd broden—
He lost his sword, his dirk, his brogues,
As far back as Culloden;

And bits of paper, ca'd "The Laws,"
Were now his last protection,
And aft he quoted verse and clause,
And chapter, page, and section;

His bannet braid hung owre his neck,
Sair sloutch'd, and scuff'd, and cloutit;
His back was bow'd, and like to break,
And low the body loutit.

He stagger'd on between them twa,
And sair the limmers jogg'd him—

And aye when he was like to fa',
They elbow'd him, and flogg'd him;

And then the weigh-bauk in his hand,—
On week-day, or on Sunday,
Which ne'er a minute still did stand—
Jow'd sair at ilka jundy.

But though they kept him on his feet,
Yet nae gudewill they bore him;
And aye when they desired to meet,
They reakit round before him:

And though they were so near a-kin
In their refined embraces,
They aften clutch'd and peel'd the skin
Frae ane anither's faces.

Nor did the carle 'scape frae scaith
In the familiar grapple;
For aft the headstrong limmers, baith,
Were rivin' at his thrapple.

And ilka ane, baith man and wife,
Whae'er has heard or seen them,
Declares he leads an awfu' life,
O' tear an' wear between them.

THE DYING MOTHER.

The eve was calm and beautiful—
'Twas summer's sweetest time—
The rose was in its richest bloom,
The lily in its prime;

The sun in setting glory shone,
And shed his softest light
Upon the moss-clad cottages,
Half hidden from the sight.

Green were the patriarchal trees,
Which spread their arms above
These shelter'd homes of humble life,
And unassuming love.

The flowers sent forth their sweetest scents
The birds their softest song;
The pearly dew was glittering
The long green grass among.

The village boys their gambols play'd
Upon the village green,
And grey-hair'd sires, with sober smiles,
Stood gazing on the scene.

But at the door of one lone cot,
With ivy tendrils bound,
A little group in silence sat,
Heedless of all around.

There a young mother and her babes—
Twin babes they seem'd to be—
Look'd sadly in each other's face
While leaning on her knee.

The mother's lips were pale as death,
And tears were in her eye;
And her poor infants also wept—
Alas! they knew not why.

While folded in a faint embrace
To their poor mother's heart,
They could not feel the farewell pang
Which told that they must part.

No thought of death was in their dreams,
They felt no withering fears;
They saw their mother's heart was sad,
And theirs were filial tears:

But nature hard in her young breast
With resignation strove,
And sorely was she tried to leave
These objects of her love.

She clasp'd her babes as fervently
As if she could compress
An age of weeping tenderness
Into that wild caress;

And then she raised her tearful eyes
To heaven with fearful smiles,

And gazed upon the gorgeous clouds
Which lay like purple isles.

And o'er her pale transparent face
There rose a transient bloom,
Alas! it was the blush of death—
A blossom from the tomb.

But from that gorgeous scenery
Where soon she hoped to dwell,
Full soon again her sadden'd eye
On her fair infants fell;

And over them she wept again,
And clasp'd them close and long;
And while she kissed their rosy cheeks,
Her soul broke forth in song.

THE SONG.

"Oh! weep not yet my little ones,
There comes a time to weep,
When no fond mother's care shall soothe
Your sobbing hearts to sleep;

"For by this flutt'ring pulse, which beats
So feebly and so low,
Your mother's sadden'd soul is warn'd
That hence it soon must go.

"And when it ceases to repeat
The warning it hath given,
Then I must cease to grieve, my babes:
There is no grief in heaven.

"But who for your necessities
Will labour to provide;
And smile, when evening comes, to see
Your little wants supplied?

"And who will sing your lullaby,
Or kiss away the tears
Which gather on your dimpled cheeks,
And calm your infant fears?

"Who will instruct your op'ning minds
The works of God to scan?
Or teach your hearts how merciful
His Maker is to man?

"Or watch your souls' development
With persevering care;
And teach your tongues to lisp betimes
God's holy name in prayer?

"Alas! alas! my little ones,
It wrings my withering heart
To leave you lone and comfortless—
To think that we must part.

"Yet live—oh, live! and He who gave
Your smiles to dry my tears
Will watch your wandering footsteps, and
Protect your helpless years.

"When my first babe forsook my breast
I wept, but wept not so:

I knew he left me for a land
Beyond the reach of woe.

"But now I leave you, lovely ones
In a cold world of strife,
Where cares, and snares, and sufferings,
At every step are rife.

"Yet do not fear my faithfulness,
Nor doubt my endless love,
Though I must leave you here below
To join the blest above.

"I go at God's command, to meet
Your sainted sire, and kiss
My cherub, who will know me well
Amid the bowers of bliss.

"But still, from that delightful place,
My spirit shall return
To those whom I have left on earth,
In want and woe to mourn.

"And if the laws of heaven permit
A supplicating breath
For beings loved, and left below,
Amid the snares of death,

"I will surround the throne on high
With an unceasing prayer,
Till you, and all I loved earth,
Are safely landed there."

THE MANIAC.

Oh! list to my lay, ye lovely, ye gay,
For sad, sad's the tale that it tells unto you;
And pity, ye maids, who in love's sweetest shades,
Ha'e the lads that are dearest aye nearest in view:

Ae morning o' May, while the first beams o' day
Were sprinkling wi' roses the bonny blue sky,
A gallant ship rode, wi' her canvass abroad,
'Mid the roar o' the wild waves and waterfowls' cry;

And aft frae the mast, her kind mariners' cast
A waefu' look back to their friends on the quay,
Who watch'd o'er her way, as she dash'd through the spray,
And lit wi' her white sails the waste o' the sea.

Fathers and mothers, and sisters and brothers,
There linger'd to gaze on that gallant ship's crew;
And wi' hearts fu' o' fears, and e'en fu' o' tears,
They bade their sad sailors a silent adieu.

But oh! what is she wi' the tear in her e'e,
And the blush on her cheek sae enchantingly fair?
Why heaves she sae high her young breast wi' a sigh?
Nae father nor friend has the lone maiden there.

Apart from the rest, in a simple robe dress'd,
And shame-faced, and silent, and trembling she stood,
To watch the proud vessel, wi' prouder waves wrestle,
As gaily she dash'd through the white foaming flood.

In silence and yearning, the crowd was returning,
Apart, to their homes, now deserted by those
Whose eyes' lovely light had illum'd them last night,
Whose songs o' the ocean had soothed their repose.

But why does that maid draw around her her plaid,
And linger alane on the cauld narrow quay?
And why does she mark that foreign-bound bark,
As if a' that she loved on the earth were at sea?

A voice on the blast told the secret at last—
The cause o' her blushes, the cause o' her pain—
A scream from the girl gave the tidings of peril,
And each eye turn'd back to the bark on the main.

Every broad bending sail flutter'd loose in the gale—
A boat was flung off by the crew from her bow;
And all could perceive, as they gazed but to grieve,
That the poor maiden's lover was drowning below.

She saw him nae mair at the kirk or the fair,
For cauld, cauld he lay in the deep rolling sea:
Her swimming brain burn'd a moment, then turn'd!
A poor homeless stranger, and maniac, was she!

And mony a lang day, by the rock-girded bay,
She sang her sad dirges in sickness and sorrow,
Till the sea-mews on high, to her seem'd to cry,
"Thy sailor—thy lover—he'll meet thee to-morrow!"

And she spread by the wave all the gifts which he gave,
And smilingly kiss'd them, then droopingly sigh'd;
And his offerings of pearl, and sea-shells, and coral,
She press'd to her quick-beating heart as she died!

THE LAND OF BEAUTY.

(Inscribed in an Album, March 1837.)

A lone and melancholy spirit,
To this melodious store
Of treasured memories, would add
One faint memorial more.

Midst offerings of the beautiful,
Where beauty's eyes may beam,
A stranger would insert his own,
Though that were but a dream.

Not his the moralizing strain,
Not his the serious lay
Which warns the young how soon the charms
Of youth must pass away.

He never saw a rose-bud die,
Nor heard a yellow leaf
Fall, rustling, from the autumn groves
Without a shade of grief;

And ill, I ween, his heart could bear
T" anticipate the time
When youth and beauty, withering,
Must mourn their fleeting prime;

And therefore doth his pensive soul
A joyful solace seek
In visions of that happy land
Where youth is on each cheek;

For there no flower is philomote,
And there no leaf is sere,
And there no autumns blight the bloom
Of an eternal year.

He sees the smiles of spirits pure,
Like sunny waters, play
On faces whose transcendent charms
Can never know decay.

He sees, with joy, seraphic eyes
In liquid lustre shine,

And gladly knows no burning tear
Can dim their beam benign.

He hears the hallow'd harmony
Of rapturous songs arise,
From lips whose every breath is tuned
To anthems of the skies.

He longs to mingle with the blest—
In that celestial Land,
To hold communion chaste and high
With beauty's holiest band;

And he would lure the lovely here,
The young—the good—the fair,
To veil their evanescent charms,
And seek for glory there;

For in that Land, where beauty blooms,
Alone may beauty be
From withering cares, and blighting time,
And sin and sorrow free.

THE ORPHAN WANDERER;

OR,

KINDNESS FOR KINDNESS.

PART I.

Ae dreary night o' dark December,
While cauld winds whistled o'er,
A wee bit tremblin' wanderer
Came to my cottage door.

I set him by the blazin' fire,
And warm'd his little feet;
And asked him why he wander'd thus?
And wherefore did he greet?

My questions had their full reply,
When the young stranger said:—
"Alas! good sir, my father kind,
And mother dear, are dead!"

"Ah! wae's my heart, my little man!"
In pitying tones, said I;
"Ye hae gude cause to wander thus—
Gude reason, too, to cry!

"Yet say—have ye no shelt'ring home,
Nor place where ye may rest,
Nor friend, nor relative, to whom
Your wants may be express'd?"

"I hae nae hame," the boy replied;
"Nae freind remains to me—
My last, last dear protector, died
When my mither closed her e'e!

"But she said I had a friend above,
Who pledged his blessed word
To guard the helpless orphan's head;
And bade me trust the Lord!

"She bade me daily seek his aid—
His wisdom to direct me—
His mercy to forgive my sins—
His shadow to protect me.

"And still I trust his promises—
And aye try to believe
The truths my mither tell'd to me;
For she could ne'er deceive.

"When night so dark and dreary grew,
And cauld winds round me blew,
I thought upon her dying words,
And time has proved them true!

"I pray'd to God, to help me, then—
And he dispised me not;

For through the dreary gloom, he led
Me to your shelt'ring cot!"

"Then thank Him now, my little lad,"
Said I; "and cease to fear;
You're welcome here this night to rest,
And share our hamely cheer:

"For though our fortune, like your ain,
Is very, very sma',
And though our house but scantly keeps
At bay the drifting snaw,

"While health and strength are spared to us,
I trust God aye will lend
The means to shelter hameless heads
Wham He may hither send!

"But guessing from your timid eye,
And from your modest mien,
You have not learn'd the vagrant art,
Nor long a wanderer been:

"For soon such wayward life as thine,
Dims the soul's noblest ray;
And bashfulness and modesty
In misery wear away.

"But still unchanged your cheek appears,
With the quick blush between;—
How long, my little man, have you
A lonely wanderer been?"

"I've wandered," said th' boy in tears;
"Aye since my mither died;
But on her grave, the grassy sod
Nae simmer's sun has dried.

"It was on merry Christmas day—
A dowy day to me—
They laid her in the cauld kirk-yard,
Beneath a leafless tree.

"They heap'd the earth upon her head;
But nae kind friend was there
To shed a tear above the dead,
Or for her orphan care.

"I was a cotton-spinner then,
At Mr Moldwart's mill,
And gladly for my daily bread,
I'd been a spinner still;

"But wearied out with watching lang
My dear, dear mither dying,
And lull'd by the incessant sound
Of wheels around me flying,

"Ae luckless night, when ten o'clock
Was past, I fell asleep:"—
Remembrance here o'ercame the boy—
He paused awhile to weep;

Then thus resumed:—"My master came
And swore the mill was broken;

And then he kick'd me from my frame
With oaths I ne'er have spoken.

"And never shall such awful words
By me be minced or mutter'd;
For my mither said they were unfit
By mortal to be utter'd.

"Thus I was banish'd frae my work
With neither friend nor brither
To tak me in, or pity me,
Except my dying mither.

"And since the day on which she died,
Upon the warld driven,
I've been a lonely wanderer,
Without a guide but Heaven!"

"Puir thing," said I; "and muckle pain,
I doubtna, ye hae borne
From those who think the wandering poor
Fit objects for their scorn.

"And muckle mair of suffering yet
Ye may hae to endure;—
But whether are ye treated best
Amang the rich or poor?"

"I scarce can tell," the boy replied;
"The rich, at times, gie mair;
But in my sorrows and distress,
They never seem to share;

"And I have sometimes thought, even when
They tried to treat me weel,
That folk maun aye be puir themsel's
Before they learn to feel.

"But I can tell ye what I met
The first nicht I was out;
An' then ye'll ken how they, at times,
Can drive puir things about.*

"When I gaed to a farmer's door,
He chased me wi' his dog;
And tell'd me to be gone, and said,
I was a thieving rogue.

"He neither gave me bread nor cheese,
Nor shelter at his farm,
Though I was hungry, sick, an' cauld,
An' he was weel an' warm."

Pleased when he saw that to his tale
Attentively I listen'd,
The little orphan still pursued
That tale with eyes which glisten'd:—

* It is only want of space which prevents the anecdote upon which this story is founded, and the history of the *real* "orphan wanderer," so far as that is known, from being given. These would have proved that his "poor historian," in what he here says, was not actuated by partiality to any class—there being, in this part of the poem at least, more truth than fiction.

"Next I gaed to a little cot
With neither barn nor byre;
And there a poor man took me in,
And warm'd me at his fire.

"And then he gave me bread and milk—
Though he had little store—
And said that he was vex'd to think
He could not give me more.

"And then he show'd a farm-toun,
Where, in a cattle-shed,
Puir hameless beggar wanderers
Had sometimes found a bed.

"But the rich man again I met,
Wha, with an angry stare,
Said, that nae wandering vagabond
Sould ever nestle there:

"For late a band of beggar brats
His stable had defiled
With vermin waur than mice or rats;
And then the rich man smiled.

"And sadly down the guttery loan
Wi' beatin' heart I turn'd—
Half-choked wi' grief, to think that I
Had been sae proudly spurn'd.

"I thought in a' the warld wide
Nae place remain'd for me,

But by some snawy dyke at last
To lay me down an' die.

"But still amid the gatherin' night,
And cluds o' whirlin' drift,
Wi' death in view, an' no a starn
In a' the darkenin' lift,

"When near my end, as then I thought,
Ae hope had power to charm—
The hope my mither's soul would meet
Wi' mine an' mak it warm.

"An' down I sat, as I believed,
Nae mair to rise again;
An' yet sae weary was my life,
The thought gae little pain.

"I had begun to feel my legs
Grow cauld, an' stiff, an' stark,
When a bit lighty blinkit out,
Like aizle mid the dark.

"Ance mair a spark o' earthly hope
Broke in upon my breast;
For that sma' glimmer seem'd to gie
Promise o' bield an' rest."

Here paused again the little man,
And turn'd his head about;
But warming as his story ran,
I long'd to hear it out.

And when assured it would not tire,
A lang, lang breath he drew;
And where his simple tale left aff
He thus began anew:—

"I startit up, an' weel it was,
For twa-three minutes mair
Had left me frozen to the snaw,
To feed the croupies there.

"My legs would scarcely move, but yet
I tried my feet to rin;
An', as I ran, I felt a glow
Down at my taes begin.

"I follow'd fast the flickering light
Owre a braid trackless moor,
Until that friendly lamp-lowe brought
Me to a laigh-house door.

"And entering joyfully, within
That little lanely sheil,
I saw a lassie like mysel',
And a woman at her wheel.

"The woman had a pleasant face;
But she seem'd sad and sick;
For marks o' sorrow an' disease
Were baith upon her cheek.

"The lassie lookit something wae,
For tears were in her e'e;

But baith appear'd to be content,
An' baith were kind to me.

"An' by their words, an' sighs, an' tears,
I soon was gi'en to learn,
That the lassie, wha was fatherless,
Was her mither's only bairn.

"I tell'd them, wi' a falterin' tongue,
The sufferin's I had borne—
The wants and waes o' poverty—
An' sneers o' bitter scorn.

"The woman listen'd to my tale,
As she had been my mither;
An' I thought the lassie's face grew pale,
As if I'd been her brither.

"'Alas! alas!' the woman said,
While tears were on her cheek,
'How had your mither's heart been wrung—
But, oh!—I scarce can speak!

"'How had her heart been wrung, if she
Had kenn'd what was to be,
And seen the bitter, bitter blasts,
Her orphan was to dree.

"'Oh! what an awfu' nicht for ane,
Sae simple an' sae young,
To wander owre the dreary moor
Whare the robber-man was hung!

"'I'm sure your little heart might quake,
Puir manny, when ye pass'd
The rickle whare the murder'd laird
Last winter breathed his last!'

"While thus the woman pitied me,
The lassie left her chair,
An' bade me come an' warm my feet,
An' thaw my frozen hair.

"And in that lonely cottar-house,
I got the warmest seat;
An' frae the hands o' poverty
Received baith heat an' meat.

"Wi' that puir lassie soon I grew
As happy as a brither;
For we were nearly the same age,
An' likit ane-anither.

"An' as the widow dourely span
At her lang weary task,
We had a thousand little things
To answer an' to ask.

"An' when the mither's task was done,
She, on the hearthstane, spread
Her ain red cloak an' coverlit,
For me to mak' a bed.

"An' then she said we baith might rest,
An' bade us baith to pray

For peace with God, and thank Him for
The mercies o' the day.

"An' she beside the fire that nicht,
A happy watch would keep;
For when a stranger was within,
She said she couldna sleep.

"I felt my heart sink heavily,
As thus the widow spoke;
An', guessing what was passin' there,
Again she silence broke:—

"'She thought that she could lippen me,
For she believed me good;
But a woman she had lately lodged
Had stown awa her hood.'

"I was right glad to hear her say
She did not think me ill;
For to be thought a thief, had gi'en
Me cause of sorrow still.

"And though the storm, wi' ceaseless sough,
Howl'd dowily an' deep,
The warmness o' her little fire
Soon lull'd me fast asleep.

"That nicht my dreams were a' as sweet
As I had found again
A mither's house, and mither's fire,
And mither o' my ain;

"For she had been sae gude, an' kind,
An' mitherly to me,
That I forgot the ills I'd borne,
An' ills I had to dree.

"I wauken'd as the wooden clock
That clickit on the wa',
Began to bir, and then to strike
The little hour o' twa.

"I peepit up, that I might see
The widow whare she sat—
And, oh! the anguish o' her look
I never can forget.

"The blood sae aften came an' went—
Her face seem'd time-about
As red as is the redest rose,
An' white 's the whitest clout.

"And still I look'd up and listen'd,
And thought a whisper there,
At times, came from her sickly lips,
As if they moved in prayer.

"She look'd at me, an' then she look'd
Whare her ain Phemy slept;
And clasp'd her hands in agony,
And hung her head, an' wept.

"Then she grew calmer, an' the fit
O' feelin' or disease,

Pass'd frae her sakeless countenance
Awa by slow degrees.

"And rising wi' a reverent air,
An auld and weel-worn book,
From its ain shelf upon the wa',
Wi' carefu' hand she took;

"And bending owre its sacred page—
It was the Book o' God—
A smile came owre her sadden'd face—
Her e'en mair brightly glow'd;

"Turn'd up to heaven they sweetly shone,
As if in heaven above
Her ardent look could fix upon
Some object of her love.

"And when she lookit down, her cheek
Glow'd wi' a tint sae bonny,
That I hae never seen sinsyne
A face sae fair on ony.

"But then from ilka e'e there hung
A clear an' sparklin' tear,
Which show'd her joy was mix'd wi' grief—
Her hope combined wi' fear.

"With e'en half steekit still I look'd;
And owre and owre again
I thought, on earth, what could it be
Had gi'en her sicken pain?

"I lookit till I fell asleep,
And, strange as it may seem,
I saw that widow-woman still;
For she was in my dream.

"Sometimes she seem'd in bloomin' health,
And sometimes she seem'd dying,
Wi' her orphan greetin' owre the bed
Whare her last friend was lying.

"And in the anguish o' that dream,
I, too, began to weep;
For something, dinnelin', owre the nerves
O' a' my frame did creep.

"It wauken'd me when mornin' grey
Had just unclosed its e'e;
And, in a dover, there she sat—
Her head upon her knee.

"But short, I wat, was her repose—
She wauken'd wi' a start;
And then the fang o' dire disease
Seem'd cankerin' at her heart,

"Pollutin' a' the fount o' life,
And a' the springs o' joy;
But powerless were the pains she felt,
Her pity to destroy.

"Amid the ruins o' her hopes,
Benevolence seem'd to melt;

Her sympathies sprang sweeter forth
With every pang she felt.

"Oh! she was like my mither, when
She stretch'd hersel' and sigh'd!
Oh! she was like my mither then,
A fortnight ere she died!

Pale was her face, and her poor bairn
I thought might shortly be
As hameless, and as fatherless,
And mitherless as me!

"But still the widow seem'd resigned,
And, though baith weak and wae,
She raise, an' through her morning moil,
Prepared hersel' to gae.

"And patiently she stirr'd the fire,
And patiently prepared
Her frugal meal, and generously
Wi' me her parritch shared.

"But for hersel', she scarcely preid
The food I thought sae fine;
Her heart had lost the tone o' health
That animated mine.

"The sweetest meat was lost to her—
Her breast sae warm an' kind,
Was fu' o' sorrow and o' pain,
And now her form seem'd pined.

"She said, 'It was a blessing still,
When strength to win and have
Was gane, the blunted appetite
Had ceased support to crave.'

"Then as an earnest look she turn'd
Of pity upon me,
'Puir laddie, whare your mither is,
Mae mithers soon maun be!

"'For there is something working here',
Her hand was on her breast—
'Which warns me that my throbbing heart,
Ere it be lang, maun rest!'

"The lassie here began to greet,
And then her mither stay'd
Her speech to me, and turning round,
'What ails ye now?' she said.

"'Oh! dinna fear, my Phemy dear—
My first, my latest, born:
Oh! dinna fear, while God is near,
Though I be from you torn!

"'And then, Oh! then, God help my bairn;
When none remain to care
For her complaints—look down on her,
And hear her humble prayer!

"'For every blessing which He takes,
God's mercy will supply

A double blessing to the poor
Who upon him rely.

"'When grieving owre your helplessness
Last night, I sadly pray'd
A promise in His Holy Book
Has open'd to my aid.

"'And I believe the hand that feeds
The raven's helpless brood
Will guard your head in danger's hour,
And still provide your food;

"'Then dinna fear, my Phemy dear,
Nor mourn at God's decree;
For He can doubly recompense
You for the loss o' me.'

"Oh, it was sad for me to see
The widow sae resign'd:
It brought my mither's latest looks,
And last words, to my mind.

"And as I lookit on the face
O' her puir helpless bairn,
And thought upon my ain hard fate,
My heart began to yearn.

"And sunk in sorrow's deepest trance
We there thegither sat,
Exchanging mony a waefu' look
As silently we grat.

"And sair we grat, and lang we sat:
It wrung my heart to leave
The widow an' her orphan bairn
In solitude to grieve:

"For though I was a stranger, wha
Could yield them nae relief,
There was a link o' friendship in
Our very, very grief.

"And when I left them, it might touch'd
A heart o' stane or steel,
To hear the widow biddin' me
A lang and last fareweel.

"And oh, how sad puir Phemy seem'd—
I think I see her yet;
Her tremblin' lips, and shakin' hands,
I never can forget,

"As she said owre her fareweel too,
And lean'd against the wa'
Breathless, and pale, and pantin', like
The fainting e'er they fa'.

"I never thought a single nicht
Could mak' a place sae dear:
How gladly had I linger'd there
Again their words to hear!

"But he, alas! wha has nae hame
Maun set his heart on nane,

Sae I began to gang awa',
Wi' heavy heart, my lane.

"But ere I enter'd down the glen—
Whare a' thing disappears—
I turn'd to look upon the place
I had bedew'd wi' tears—

"Whare I had met wi' sympathy,
And been sae very glad,
And seen sae muckle sorrow, and
Had grown sae very sad:

"I saw them baith—the lassie sat
On the auld divet seat,
The mither lean'd against the wa'—
My heart began to beat.

"I sat down on a muckle stane
Upon a sandy knowe,
And no a breath o' wind wad blaw
To cool my breast or brow.

"The heavy dowy breezeless air
That fit o' sorrow nursed:
I loosed my waistcoat buttons there,
And thought my heart wad burst.

"And lang I sat, and hung my head,
In that wild spot alane,
And grat till I was sick again
Upon that auld grey stane.

"And aften has my heart grown grit,
And sad, and sair, sinsyne,
When thinkin' on that lassie's fate,
Sae like, alas! to mine;

"For sair, I fear, her mither's heart,
That was sae gude an' kind,
Lies cauld, cauld in the kirkyard now,
That dwellin' o' the pined.

"I see her in my nightly dream
Wi' cauld an' hunger black—
A friendless, hameless, helpless thing,
Wi' nane her part to tak'.

"But naething in my wanderin's
O Phemy can I hear,
And though she's seldom frae my mind,
I dinna like to spier.

"Yet muckle, muckle do I dread
A thing sae slim and weak
Will sink aneath the withering
That chill's the orphan's cheek;

"And muckle, muckle do I fear
I'll never see her mair,
But while a thought in memory lives,
Her image will be there!"

Here terminated, with a sigh,
The little wanderer's story—

A sigh which was expressive of
His sympathetic sorrow.

By this the porridge an' the milk
In timmer plates were servin',
An' glad was he to tak a share,
Like ane wha had been starvin'.

And when his little kite was fou,
Nae langer watch he keepit,
For down we spread his little bed,
And there he soundly sleepit.

But what a train o' mournfu' thoughts,
And sympathies, and fears,
Were rais'd by that wee wand'rers' tale
O' sorrows an' o' tears.

The widow an' her orphan girl
Before my fancy rose,
With all her wants and sufferings,
And unbefriended woes.

And he, her poor historian,
Sae little an' sae young,
Intelligent and desolate—
For him my heart was wrung.

Niest day was rain frae morn to night,
And still he was my guest,
And simple as his fare might be,
He said "it was a feast."

And ilka tear the laddie shed,
And ilka sigh he drew,
Still brought his noble sympathies
And sorrows a' to view.

His mournfu' spirit seem'd to feed
On pity, when bestow'd;
And ever and anon his cheek
With richer crimson glow'd.

I saw he was intelligent,
And through the wild deray
Of his untutor'd mind, I saw
The beams of genius play.

The soul of poetry unsung
Lay sleepin' in his e'e,
And music dwelt upon his lips
As rich as rich could be:

'Twas untaught Nature's melody,
Like blackbird's on the tree—
And from his glowing heart it gush'd
As sweetly and as free.

The ditties of the Scottish muse
Had been his solace lang,
And aften had he soothed his woes
With some bewailing sang.

That mournful lay, The Forest Flowers,
He sung with touching skill:

Gil Morris' melting melody
He, too, full well could trill.

How beam'd his sympathetic eye!
And how the big tears sprung!
While the sang o' Highland Mary
With laigh sweet air he sung.

To his sweet voice, his early woes
A mournfu' tone had given,
That suited well the poet's lay
To his lost love in Heaven;

For a' the passion o' the bard,
By lang, lang years unspent,
I'the wand'rer's thrillin' notes were heard,
As he warbled that lament.

And wi' sic sangs as I hae named,
Which stir the heart to feel,
The darksome day, and lang dark e'en,
Pass'd owre our heads fu' weel.

When mornin' roused the wanderer
Wi' the cock's unwelcome craw,
I felt mair pain wi' him to part
Than wi' some ither twa.

His fate sae hung about my heart
Through mony a' after year,
I cou'dna think on his sad tale
And shun to shed a tear.

THE ORPHAN WANDERER;

OR,

KINDNESS FOR KINDNESS.

PART II.

Wha kens where friends or foes may meet,
And frowns or favours be return'd?
Oh, let not then the poorest thing
That breathes on earth, be proudly spurn'd!

WINTER was shining on the hills
In sheets o' frozen snaw,
An' gorgin' in the glens an' vales
In an uncertain thaw.

The burns frae neighbourin' braes came down
Owre whiten'd rocks o' frost,
An' mining through the fretted ice,
In hidden tracks were lost.

The nights were lang, an' dreary tôo,
An cauld, cauld was the day,
When the voice o' dire Necessity—
Which none may dare gainsay—

Commandit me to leave my hame—
My little cottage ha'—
An' gang whare strange was ilky face,
An' ilky sight I saw.

I ne'er had left my hame afore,
An' when the last kent hill
Was lost among the distant mist,
I felt my heart grow chill.

A momentary swither pass'd
Through ilka nerve an' vein,
As I thought on the faces there
I ne'er might see again.

The wee, wee helpless bairnies
Wham I had left alane,
Wha had nae friend to pity them,
Nor guide, if I were gane.

The fears I felt at partin' were
A father's anxious fears;
The tears that then bedew'd my e'en,
They were a father's tears.

For I had mony a weary mile
O' unken'd gait to gae,
Owre mony a muir, through mony a glen,
Up mony a weary brae.

Nae scrip weel fill'd had I to bear;
But what was far, far worse,

I bore a load upon my heart—
I bore an empty purse!

And weel I saw that in my path
Were pains and perils rife,
And though for life I trembled then,
'Twas for a father's life;

For I had aft confronted death
Before, without a fear,
When there was none beside mysel
To whom my life was dear.

I pass'd Loch Leven's grassy bank,
And saw its waters play
Around the isle where Scotland's Queen,
The lovely Mary, lay;

And wept her captive tears, and gazed
Upon those hills sae blue,
Whare ance the falcons o' her sires
In glorious freedom flew.

I pass'd the lonely kirkyard, whare
The humble dust reposed
O' him wha sung o' that green isle,*
An' her its wa's enclosed;

Wha sat upon his unmade grave,
And saw the lovely Spring

* Michael Bruce.

Unfauld her sweets, but felt that she
Nae joy to him could bring.*

I pass'd around the Lomond's base,
And high aboon me saw
The twin-hills hap their towerin' heads
In heaps o' driftit snaw;

And wheelin' round an' round their taps
The seamaws scream'd aloud,
Wi' wild an' stormy melody,
Beneath a threatenin' cloud.

I pass'd by Falkland's Palace grey—
A structure bleach'd an' blear'd—
Whare Scotland's ancient dynasty
In regal pomp was rear'd.

But the glare o' royalty was gane
Frae that auld palace wa,'
An the courtiers an' the parasites
Had left its silent ha'.

I enter'd Eden's cheerless muir—
A sandy solitude,
Wi' here an' there a cultured field
'Mid wastes o' heath an' wood.

An' past that muir the Eden winds
Wi' mony a wanderin' sweep,

* See an elegy by the young and neglected genius mentioned in the last note.

An' irrigates mair fertile fields
While journeyin' to the deep.

That stream which wont to be so still
Had burst outowre the lea,
And laid the level haughs around
Beneath a muddy sea.

And as the gloomy nicht drew near,
My heart wi' fears was fash'd;
And faster owre the slushy muir,
Wi' weary legs I splash'd;

For i' the waste whare I was now,
Ae stormy wintry day,
A traveller perish'd in the snaw,
An' a packman lost his way.

An' aye, as darker grew the nicht,
Mair doubtfu' grew the track,
Till I ken'dna whether to proceed,
Or whether to turn back.

Nae shepherd's shiel, nor ploughman's hut,
In a' that wild I knew,
An' ilka minute gloomier still
The dreary gloamin' grew,

Till black an' perfect darkness fell
Around my lanely head,
Wi' silence maist as terrible
As if Nature had been dead.

I had rejoiced to hear the scream
Even o' the howlet drear,
For then I would hae ken'd at least
A livin' thing was near.

I stood an' listen'd 'mid the gloom
Until my brain ran round,
But no ae sough o' wind pass'd by,
Nor breath o' cheerfu' sound.

And fate seem'd gatherin' owre me; for
A storm o' feathery snaw,
In deep an' smotherin' density,
Around me 'gan to fa':

And it seem'd death to linger there,
And it seem'd death to flee:
Nae hope had I but i' the muir
An unken'd death to dee.

And sadly was my heart resign'd
To meet my snawy fate,
Till visions came across my mind
Which made me spurn its weight.

I thought upon my infant race
Left fatherless at hame,
An' their sad case had power to brace
My fast relaxin' frame;

And onward, onward through the muir
In wilder'd haste I pass'd,

Though aft 'mid bramble bush an' brier
I was entangled fast:

Yet onward, onward, onward still
Wi' restless feet I ran,
In hope to find some place o' rest—
Some bless'd abode o' man.

But worn wi' lang protracted toil,
I felt my feeble strength
Unequal to the hopeless search—
My spirit sunk at length;

And down into a thorny ditch
In a dreary drow I fell,
And there was nane to see me die,
Or my sad death to tell.

But, flake on flake, I felt the snaw
Around my temples wreath,
An' round my breast, an' round my brow,
Stiflin' my very breath:

But yet it fell sae silently,
An' on my senses press'd
Sae lightly, that my weary limbs
Enjoy'd a sort o' rest.

And there I lay—a dizen'd wretch—
Half-doverin' in despair;
Yet frae that bed o' death I breathed
To Heaven a fervent prayer.

Then through the stillness o' the nicht,
Fell on my listenin' ear,
The sweetest sang of a' the sangs
I ever yet did hear:

And ne'er did heart o' mortal man
Wi' sic a joy rejoice
As mine, when roused again to life
By that delightfu' voice.

Then strugglin' frae that ditch sae deep,
I cast my fears awa',
An' frae my stiff an' tangled hair,
Shook aff the wreathin' snaw.

I stood maist as astonish'd there
As auld Columbus stood
When he saw the light, at dead o' night,
Glance through an Indian wood.

What being can it be, thought I,
Wha sings sae sweetly there?
Oh! can it be a mortal, or
A spirit o' the air?

Or can it be that I am free
Frae mortal life an' breath,
An' this some magic melody,
Or happy dream o' death?

Ah, no! it is a mortal's voice
That now salutes my ear;

For hope returns wi' every note
An' every word I hear!

And bless'd for ever be the tongue
That syllabled that sang,
Which seem'd as if an angel sung
To lead my steps alang.

And doubtless He whose pillar-cloud
Led Israel's fearfu' host,
When through the trackless wilderness,
Before their foes they cross'd—

E'en He my 'wilder'd cry had heard,
For He is ever near,
An' graciously inspired the sang
That sounded in my ear.

It led me through the dismal gloom
Safe to a cot-house door,
An' never mair shall I forget
That dwellin' o' the moor.

For there a youthfu' father sat—
A bairnie on his knee;
An there a youthfu' mither watch'd
Its smiles wi' faithfu' e'e;

An' baith at ance they raise to bid
Me to their fireside come,
As kindly and as couthily
As it had been my hame.

The young gudeman an' young gudewife
Seem'd courteously to vie
Wha would be first to bring me food,
An' first my duds to dry.

And aye the gudeman gazed on me,
As if he seem'd to ken
A face that he had seen before,
But coudna mind again.

And there was something, too, I thought,
About his sparklin' e'e,
That didna seem as he had been
A stranger aye to me.

And when my duds were dried, an' I
Began to tell the tale
O' a' my wilder'd wanderings
Through Eden's trackless vale,

He said that he could guess the pangs
That struggled in my breast
While splashin' owre the slushy moor,
Without a place o' rest.

For he had been a stranger aft
Beneath the gloom o' nicht,
Without a friend, or hame, or hope,
Or star to bless his sicht.

And he had felt the bitterness
O' his ain cheerless fate,

When spurn'd again into the storm,
Frae many a proud man's gate.

And he had felt the happiness
O' bein' received within,
When at the point o' perishing,
Wi' a sair droukit skin.

For he had been an orphan left,
An' wander'd far an' near,
Through mony a dismal winter nicht,
In hopelessness an' fear.

He said, too, he should ne'er forget,
Till his life's latest day,
The kindness that he ance had met
At a place ca'd Gowany Brae.

"Gin ye hae met wi' kindness there,"
Said I, wi' meikle glee—
"I've had my share; for kind hearts there,
This nicht are sair for me.

"An' gin I were at Gowany Brae,
Fu' mony a gratefu' tear
Shall fa' frae e'en ye ne'er hae seen,
For kindness shown me here."

The gudeman startit frae his chair,
An' took me by the hand
Wi' smiles o' recollection that
I scarce could understand.

"Oh! mind ye not that fearfu' nicht,"
Wi' earnest voice, he said;
"When ye kindly shelter'd frae the storm
A hameless laddie's head?

"An' mind ye na the tale he tell'd,
O' the widow an' her bairn—
For whose sad fate his little heart
Sae piteously did yearn?"

"I mind the nicht and laddie weel,"
Said I, "o' which ye speak;
An' aft I've thought on him sinsyne,
Wi' tears upon my cheek.

"But no ae word I've heard o' him
For mony a bygane year;
And yet I think I see him still,
And still his voice I hear."

"Ye'r right, ye'r right—my faithfu' friend!"
Wi' firmer grasp, said he;
"For ye hear his voice, an' see his face,
When me ye hear an' see!

"It was me ye shelter'd frae the storm,
Wi' kind an' tender care;
And here's the widow's orphan bairn,
For whom my heart was sair!

"I likit her when first we met;
An' when we met again

She gave her heart an' hand to me,
An' now she is my ain!"

"How wond'rous is the Hand," said I;
"That regulates our ways;
Thus 'bread upon the waters cast,
Is found in many days!'

"For I, wha ance, by chance, bestow'd
On thee some little aid,
Am guided back by Providence,
Again to be repaid!

"And she wha ance had treatit thee
Wi' pity in thy need,
Although unsought, hath seen thee brought
Back to return the meed.

"An' lang, lang may ye baith be spared,
An' blest to ane anither,
Wi' bosoms leal that beat an' feel
In happy time thegither.

"An' may your bairnies a' be blest
Wi' bairnies o' their ain,
To cheer their hearts ere ye frae them
By Death's cauld hand be ta'en.

"But tell me, if ye can, gudewife,
Did your puir mither die
O' that disease she suffer'd from
When the gudeman met wi' me?"

"Oh! yes—oh! yes"—the young gudewife
Wi' tender tears replied;
"In that disease my mither dear
Dwined on a while an' died!"

"An' ye would e'en be destitute,"
Said I; "when she was gane,
An' ye was left, an orphan bairn,
In this wide warld alane."

"Aye, destitute indeed!" said she;
"And in my want o' faith,
I pray'd to God, at times, to send
The bitter boon o' death!

"I had nae friend to counsel me—
Nae helping hand to save—
Nor hame to hap my helpless head,
Except my mither's grave!

"Nae wonder, then, though my young heart,
In agony an' grief,
Was blindly covetous o' death,
Which promised sure relief!

"But God, in mercy unto me,
Denied my sinfu' prayer,
And sent a friend—a faithfu' friend—
To solace my despair!"

"An' how we were ye providit for?—
If it be fair to spier—

For a' the ways o' Providence,"
Said I; "I fain would hear.

"We ken that in His blessed Word
He promises to be
'A Father to the fatherless;'
Has He been such to thee?"

"Oh! He is faithfu' to His Word",
The gudeman answer'd me;
"But neither Phemy nor mysel',
Frae sufferin' sair were free.

"God aften leaves us for a while,
To sorrow an' to pain,
That we may feel his mercy mair
When He returns again.

"The maist feck o' my history,
Ye've listen'd to langsyne;
An' Phemy's, though less curious,
Is something like to mine.

"The farmer o' Gudedivetland
Met her ae rainy day,
An' took her to the minister,
To see what he would say.

"Then Doctor Drone proposed to send
Her to the spinnin'-mill;
'Sic birth,' he said; 'for ane like her,
It might do no that ill.'

"And Mr Mucklecraw declared
That he would send his cart
Wi' her; for out o' charity
He wish'd to do his part.

"Meikle they said o' charity,
An' tell'd what they had done;
An' a the things that they had gi'en—
The auld claes and auld shoon.

"But just as they had settled it,
Up came auld Charlie Dick;
And baith stood glowrin' as they'd seen
A bogle, or Auld Nick.

"'Awa,' said Charlie; 'baith o' ye
This minute, ye are free;
Leave Poverty to Poverty,
An' Phemy leave to me

"'And let me tell ye, Mr. Craw,
A heart as heard as steel
May whimper over sentiments,
It ne'er was form'd to feel.

"'Then speed ye to your leman dear,
And eloquently groan;
But never mair, in pity, speer
For Phemy Morrison.

"'Gae thraw your mou' in sympathy,
For some great tragic chief;

But never wi' your presence mock
The wail o' real grief.

"'And as for you, gude Doctor Drone
Gae hame an' sympatheeze
In Christian love an' charity,
An' keep ye at your ease.

"'I take poor Phemy for my ain,
An' nae expense will spare
To make her worthy o' my love
An' worthy o' my care.'

"Wi' that he took my Phemy's hand
And led her fast awa',
Leavin' ahint them Doctor Drone
And Mr Mucklecraw.

"But Providence, to try her, yet
Had mair distress in store;
And I maun tell ye a' the trials
The orphan lassie bore:

"Soon stricken down wi' sair disease
Her kind protector lay;
She watch'd him on his dying bed,
And saw his dying day;

"And then ance mair upon the world
A helpless orphan flung,
In friendless, hameless, poverty,
Her little hands she wrung.

"'Till the guid laird o' Landledale,
Ae early winter morn,
Met her beside her mither's grave,
Greeting, like ane forlorn.

"He was a sober guid auld man,
Wha wore a bannet blue:
An' the orphan an' the widow aye
His tenderest pity drew.

"An' his kind heart at ance grew grit,
Poor Phemy's case to see:
He took her kindly by the hand,
While tears were in his e'e;

"And wi' a faither's tenty care,
He led my Phemy hame
To his auld Lodge, at Landledale,
And his auld sonsy dame.

"An' daily did the twa, to her,
Act a parental part:
They gae her wark, an' gae her lear,
An' sooth'd her sorrowin' heart,

"Wi' the consolin' promises
Which God's eternal word
Has offer'd to the faithfu' few
Wha humbly seek the Lord.

"An' when the guide auld laird grew blind,
My Phemy was his guide,

An' led him in his daily walks,
An' still was at his side.

"The laird was cheerfu' to the last
O' his lang happy life;
And, jestin', aft he ca'd his guide,
"His little young gudewife!"

"'Twas there, when grown up to a man,
An' labourin' for my bread,
I met wi' Phemy an' the laird,
As down the burn they stray'd.

* * * *

"The maid sae lovely was in youth,
The laird sae sweet, in age,
That, to my wonderin' sicht, they seem'd
A seraph an' a sage.

"I didna ken my Phemy then;
But love's delightfu' lowe
Was kindled in my heart, an' burn'd,
I couldna tell ye how.

"I learn'd her name an' history
Frae an auld man by the way,
An' to the Lodge o' Landledale,
Came back that very day.

"The sun was blinkin' bonnily
Upon the gowany lea,

When I met Phemy by hersel'
Beneath a chesnut tree.

"The blush o' maiden modesty
Was fresh upon her cheek,
And yet a smile was on her lip
When first she tried to speak.

"But nane can tell the happiness
We felt ance mair to meet:
Our intercourse that e'enin' was
Baith rapturous an' sweet;

"For though we 'd met but ance afore,
And soon were doom'd to part,
That hour had found a place for me
E'en in a lassie's heart;

"An' time or distance ne'er effaced
Ae feelin' o' langsyne,
Nor blotted out ae lineament
O' her loved face frae mine.

"Just at that time the gude auld laird
A servant man required;
And sic a kindly master was
By mony a ane desired.

"And I was needfu' o' a place,
My master being dead;
For we, by daily labour, aye
Maun win our daily bread.

"I gave my testimonials to
The laird, wha saw them not;
But his kind lady recognised
The lines her brither wrote.

"And though she ne'er had seen my face
Afore she saw me here,
Yet, to a sister's yearnin' heart,
Her brither's name was dear.

"And I was fee'd and arled there,
To ca' the cart an' plough
On Landle's bonny banks an' braes,
An' Landle's gowany howe.

"An' blest for ever be that day!
Since then, the same roof-tree
That keepit Phemy frae the storm,
Has also keepit me.

"The laird, in his last testament,
Bequeath'd a lease for life
O' this wee cot, an' park o' land,
To me an' my guidwife;

"And here we've lived as happily
As man an' wife may live,
Whase little wants are a' supplied,
An' something left to give,

"To help the poor an' destitute
In days o' their distress;

An' never do I think sic gifts
Have made our little less."

My kindly entertainer's tale
Was now tell'd till an end,
And little mair hae I to tell
To either foe or friend.

Niest day I wi' the mornin' rose
An' got my errand done,
An' stood afore my ain house door
Juist at the set o' sun.

Thus happily my story ends:—
Kindness for Kindness still
Cements the hearts o' faithfu' friends,
An' saves frae muckle ill.

An' aft a little kindness shewn,
Even to a generous foe,
Has been repaid wi' sympathy
In future days o' woe.

THE FAITHFUL SERVANT.

A BALLAD.

With dreams of good and ill too high
For the low world where he was placed,
Poor Harold was not made to be
By rising Fortune's favours graced.

He did not fawn before his lord,
With simpering look and supple knee;
He did not tremble at his word,
With craven-nerved timidity.

He did not fear again to frown
Upon the haughty debauchee,
Who vainly strove to scowl him down
From his own native dignity.

He knew that sycophants were rife—
He saw the favours they obtain'd;
But he despised their venal life,
And all their vile rewards disdain'd.

And masters' favours seldom fall
To servants with such hearts as he,
Who scorn to flatter in the hall,
Or pamper pride and vanity.

From year to year he sunk apace,
While worthless menials round him rose;
But patient still in his disgrace,
Unbendingly he downward goes.

Though poor, his mien was still erect,
And still erect his head was borne,
And all might treat him with neglect,
Though none might dare to treat with scorn.

But Time in his career will prove
The truth of every fawning slave,
And who deserves a master's love—
The faithful, or the flattering knave?

Behold, around yon Castle gate,
Assembled, many a fierce brigand,
Impatient, for their leader wait
With pistol and with sword in hand.

And see upon his jet-black barb
He comes as proud, as fearlessly,
As if that plume and robber's garb
Were royalty's own livery.

And hark! he issues his commands,
As if by freedom's glorious laws
He led his country's patriot bands
To battle in his country's cause.

Dismounted now he leads the way,
The first to conquer or to fall;

And bloody sure shall be the fray,
For bold is he who guards the wall.

And numerous is his menial train,
And well supplied with weapons bright,
And dearly shall the robbers' gain
Be bought—if gain they get to-night.

But hark! again the robber's horn
Summons the Castle to submit:
In vain the sun shall gild the morn,
Ere proud Count Vasco deign' to quit.

No bolt is drawn—no voice replies;
All idly sweeps the useless blast—
Booming along the midnight skies,
It dies among the hills at last.

A moment at the Castle gate,
Impatient stands the robber-chief;
But quick must be the work of fate—
The counsel short—the orders brief.

"Comrades! our summons is defied—
What will not bend we well can break:
To-night our sabres must be dyed—
Down with the gate for Vasco's sake!"

Axes and hammers—stroke on stroke—
Upon the massy postern dash;
And whirling from the splinter'd oak,
Beneath the moon the fragments flash.

It creaks—it bends—it bursts in twain;
And on they rush—the pass is free;
But some shall ne'er return again
To celebrate their victory.

Now onward—onward for the prize—
The happy guard must slumber well;
And now if they should chance to rise,
They may forget their tale to tell.

Hurrying along the airy trance,
With flashing eyes and dashing feet,
Upon that band the moonbeams glance—
But where the foes they came to meet?

Without a stroke they reach the stair—
Where are the cowardly menials gone?—
The proud Count Vasco meets them there—
But, ah! the Count is all alone!

Yet stern his look—his sword is bare—
And firm his step, and firm his tone;
And flattering hope, and faint despair,
Seem both alike to him unknown.

Now pistols flash, and shouts arise;
But in the dim uncertain light,
Though sternly aim'd by steady eyes,
The distant mark deceives the sight.

And he returns each volley sent
With better success, ball for ball;

For where the robber-horde are pent,
Though dark, he cannot miss them all.

But on they press to closer fight;
And soon that haughty lord must yield
His Castle to superior might,
Or fall, with none his head to shield.

The long contested stair is won,
And every step with blood is red;—
Count Vasco, thine shall soon atone
For that thou hast so boldly shed!

Soon shall thy mother, o'er her son,
A hopless frantic mourner stand,
For thou must fight, not one by one,
But all at once—that robber band!

Long baited there, with flashing eyes
He welcomes on the bloody train;
Once more their fury he defies,
And nearly turns them back again.

But now his blows more feebly fall—
Though some have sunk beneath his might,
One sword may not contend with all:
His death must close the doubtful fight.

He reels before the robber chief,
Yet neither flies nor begs for life:
His blood flows fast—he falls!—and brief
Is mercy's gleam, in such a strife.

Already o'er his helpless head
Waves, in a hand unused to spare,
The deeply dyed and thirsty blade—
But mark!—who comes with weapon bare?

Another's sword receives the blow,
And turns its vengeful force aside;
And down before that stranger foe
Is borne the robber's plume of pride.

And now, beneath the castle wall,
Dismounting from their foaming steeds,
And forming, at their leader's call,
A gallant band the entrance threads;

And swelling wildly over all,
The din of stroke, and groan, and cheer,
Which mingles in that dubious hall,
A trumpet's blast rings loud and clear.

Now turn, ye bloody bandits, turn,
And boldly meet more equal foes!
Now let your fiercest passions burn,
And man to man in battle close.

They come—they come! with steady tread;
Their footsteps now the robbers hear;
And silent stand, but not in dread,
For theirs are hearts unused to fear.

A moment in dark counsel mix'd,
They lean upon their ponderous swords;

And now—their deadly purpose fix'd—
From man to man, in whisper'd words,

The secret sign is quickly pass'd,
And every hand is rais'd on high
To take that oath—the last—the last!
Which binds the brotherhood to die.

And now the robbers stand prepared
In hotter conflict to engage;
And none shall spare, and none be spared
In the next burst of wrath and rage.

A moment for the word they wait—
'Tis given! and down they madly rush,
Impatient of their dubious fate—
Burning, their cautious foes to crush.

nd now, like maddening waves, they meet;
And pistols flash, and sabres shiver;
And some, beneath their foeman's feet,
Have sunk to rise no more for ever.

Pent to the wall, the robbers stand,
Devoid of fear, devoid of hope:
Despair unites their lessening band,
And nerves with numbers still to cope.

But fast the fierce marauders fall,
And man by man expire: the last
Stands lonely by the bloody wall,
And round him bullets rattle fast:

He too is struck, and one and all
Lie stretch'd in blood! The strife is past,
And Silence reigns within the hall
Whence Mercy lately fled aghast!

And where is proud Count Vasco now?
Senseless he lies where first he fell,
But lives—though bloody be his brow;
For he maintain'd that conflict well.

And where is he who interposed
Between him and the desperate strife,
When but a moment more had closed
The struggle with Count Vasco's life?

Not distant from his lord he lies—
Blood on his bosom and his head;
But now, alas! his closed eyes
Tell that the hero's soul hath fled.

Poor Harold saw the flatterers fly,
When danger came, with all their speed,
And leave their lord alone to die—
Deserted at his utmost need:

And he, too, fled, but not like them—
With nobler thoughts his bosom burn'd;
Successful in his generous aim,
In happy time he back return'd.

'Twas he the faithful rescue led,
And fast outran the fleetest steed—

He, when the fawning menials fled,
Came boldly for his lord to bleed.

Poor as he was, and humbly born,
Too late for him, that master learn'd
That truest hearts for ever scorn
To feed on favours basely earn'd.

A SKETCH FROM REAL LIFE.

Oh! saw ye e'er a family
Poor, pious, and content
With the laborious lot in life
Which Heaven to them had lent:

Thankful for life, and leave to toil,
And thankful for their health—
More thankful than the thoughtless rich,
For all their unearn'd wealth?

Late, such a family I saw,
And gladden'd by the sight,
I felt my heart expand, and glow,
With warmer feelings, bright.

Peaceful and patient in their toil,
As one they seem'd to move;
Cordial in all their intercourse,
And constant in their love.

And ne'er did novelist or bard
  Invent a scene so fair,
As that ingenuous family
  Met at their evening prayer.

'Twas then their venerable sire
  The sacred volume took,
And read, for their instruction here,
  A portion from that book:

And when they knelt around his chair,
  And heard his spirit rise,
In solemn supplicating tones,
  To One above the skies,

There was a pathos and a power
  In his paternal voice
Which thrilled each sympathetic heart
  With pure and heavenly joys.

Well might the vicious and the vain,
  In all their pomp and pride,
Envy the quiet happiness
  Which beam'd by that fireside;

For if this earth afford a drop
  Of pure unmingled bliss,
'Tis found by such a family,
  At such an hour as this.

But, oh! even virtue will not ward
  The blow which Fate prepares;

Nor prudence, piety, or love,
Or warmest tears, or prayers,

Avert the shaft by Heaven decreed,
The dearest to remove,
From fond affection upon earth,
To happiness above.

I saw that venerable man,
At Duty's bidding, go
To where fierce Fever's fiery fang
Held a poor parent low;

And o'er the sufferer's sleepless bed
With anxious care he hung,
And held the cordial to his lips
To cool his burning tongue;

And o'er him bent his head in prayer,
Though conscious that his breath
Came, freighted, from a poison'd source,
With dire disease and death.

Then each poor neighbour, when he heard
The tale, his head would shake,
And tremble for that faithful friend,
And for his family's sake.

No idle fancies made them fear;
For Death was onward led
From house to house, triumphantly,
And pass'd from bed to bed.

The patient died !—and he who heard
His last expiring groan,
With slow and solemn step retired,
Ere long to breathe his own.

The subtle poison of disease
Had reach'd the fount of life ;
And soon within his throbbing veins
Commenced the fatal strife.

He laid him down upon his bed,
And every art was vain :
Affection could not cool his blood—
Nor med'cine cure his pain.

Yet he was kindly watch'd, I ween,
By one with sleepless eye—
One who had shared in all his woes,
Nor shrunk for him to die.

If mortal power from her beloved
Had been endowed to take
Those direful pangs, all willingly
She 'd borne them for his sake.

It might not be !—a look of love
Was all the speechless man
Could offer back to her who wept
The shortness of his span.

At midnight, louder grew his moans,
And wilder grew his eye;

At morn, no sound was heard within,
Save sobs of agony.

The dim—the deep repose of death
Had closed that struggle brief;
And death, and death alone, can close
The widow'd mourner's grief.

Though loud the fatherless lament,
While life is in its spring,
A few short months fresh promises
Of future joy will bring.

But to the widow's mourning heart,
Days, weeks, nor months, nor years
Shall ere restore its former joys,
Or fairly dry her tears.

Yet desolate as is her heart—
Sad as her lot hath been—
Hope holds a bless'd communion there
With piety, unseen:

Hope points her husband in the skies,
Before the eternal throne;
And Piety presents the prize,
And bids her follow on:

Bids her with patience, prayer, and faith,
Still strive to enter in,
And reign with those who triumph there
O'er doubt, and death, and sin.

THE SOLDIER'S WIFE.

Ye few, who nobly born an' bred
At lordly board—in lordly bed—
  Deem that no noble feeling
Can settle on the poor man's head,
  Or glad his humble shieling;
Even if to move you it should fail,
  Amid the playthings and the pranks
    Of elevated life,
I pray you listen to the tale
  Of a poor soldier of the ranks,
    And of his faithful wife.

The British banner waved on high,
  And British swords below:
Was this a sight for woman's eye,
  Which melts o'er every woe?
And round and round, from rank and file,
  The musket volleys play'd;
And, scattering death for many a mile,
  The ceaseless cannonade
Thunder'd, with deafening shouts between
Of charging columns, and the din
  Of many a bickering blade.

Were these meet sounds for woman's ears—
Those inlets of delights and fears
  So delicate, so slight,
That they appear as only made
To listen, in some silvan shade,
  To Zephyrs breathing light?

Rank after rank was swept away
And stiffening in their gore,
Or struggling in their life-blood lay
Thousands of gallant men,
Who fell to rise no more;
While heedless o'er their mangled slain
The routed squadron fled
To rally in the rear,
And when they turn'd to charge again,
Regardless of their kindred dead,
And friends and comrades dear,
They dash'd with doubly reckless tread,
And spirit-maddening cheer.

Was this a part for woman's heart,
That timid thing, to bear?
Could aught so soft—so fearful oft—
In female form, be there?

Yes—there a heart as kind, as true,
As warm as ever shed
The pearly drops of Pity's dew
Above the living or the dead,
Borne, by its wild excess of love,
Amid the conflicts' heat,
Though timid as the turtal dove,
In sickening anguish beat.

There was a youthful soldier's wife
Beside her bleeding husband kneeling,
Regardless of the thickening strife—
Lost in that extacy of feeling

Which gathers round the bursting heart
A moment ere all hope depart.

And swords might clash, and cannons roll,
Unheard, unheeded, in her ears:
Her's was that agony of soul
Which neither feels, nor sees, nor hears,
Save that one image of despair—
The object of its hopes and fears.
And her devoted love was there,
Expiring where he fell,
And murmuring to her tender care
A long and last farewell.

Her eye but saw the death-wound deep
That gash'd his manly chest;
Her ear but heard the life-drops drip
On her own burning breast;
And still she strove to staunch their flow,
And bathed his quivering lip
With water from the spring,
(That last sad solace of his woe,)
Which he had lost the power to sip,
Though close beside him murmuring.

His moans grew more convulsed and low,
His breath more deeply drawn and slow;
But still his glazing eye
Gazed sadly on his helpless wife,
And even when all grew vacancy,
Its rayless, sightless, changeless stare,

As if his love outlasted life,
  Was fixed on his young widow there.
  And must stern hands that mourner tear
From that beloved dead?
  Must she, the victim of despair,
Back to her native land be led,
  In solitude to pine?
  Must those who never parted part?
No—Heaven forbade a doom so dread,
  And sent, as fortune more benign,
  The ball which whistled to the heart.*

She sunk upon her soldier's clay
  And lock'd him in a last embrace;
  And breast to breast, and face to face,
All lifeless there they lay:
Their faithful blood together flow'd
  In one untainted stream;
Their souls, united, rose to God
  Like one relucent beam.

No name was carved, nor column raised,
  On that red field, to tell

* The anecdote to which these verses owe their origin was told to the author's mother, six or eight years before he was born, by a very old beggar, to whom she was in the habit of giving a weekly alms, and who had been at the battle of Fontenoy. According to his account of it, "The Soldier's Wife" was cut in two by a cannon ball while in the act of giving water to her husband. The author had heard his mother repeat the story when a boy: he never forgot it, and in after years he dashed it into irregular verse.—A. B.

Where Love's last glorious look was gazed,
And Love's young martyr fell;
But when the veteran victors came,
With slow and mournful tread,
From gathering vultures to reclaim
Their loved and honoured dead,
Then wept the generous hearted and the brave,
As o'er that youthful pair they sadly spread
The blood-soak'd earth of their untimely grave—
The covering of their last connubial bed!

Though silent was the trump of fame,
And mute the muse's lay
O'er that young matron's humble name,
And o'er her dying day,
The proudest belle in Beauty's mart,
Or bower of regal life,
Might learn a lesson of the heart
From that poor soldier's wife,
Who fearlessly in duty fell
With her own soldier boy,
'Mid cannon's roar, and battle's yell,
On the field of Fontenoy.

ON THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SLAVES, AUGUST 1836.

No sun hath ever risen more bright
Than that which rose to-day,
To break the scourge of Tyranny,
And tear its bonds away.

Freedom, exulting, hail'd its rise,
Religion bless'd its beam;
And stainless spirits in the skies
Made it their glorious theme!

This day hath wash'd the blackest blot
From Britain's scutcheon'd fame;
And made the Mistress of the World
Deserving of the name.

SONNET ON THE DEPARTURE OF SUMMER 1835.

And thou art gone, sweet summer—sweet and brief—
With all thy gay associations gone:
The season of the sere and yellow leaf,
With pale and melancholy face, comes on;
And I behold, with deep but bootless grief,
The flowers all wither'd, and the foliage strown;
For these were friends which, in my solitude,
Oft fill'd my heart with many a pleasing thought—
Aye, they were images of beings good
And innocent, which to my fancy brought
Pictures of that society above,
Whose calm and peaceful spirit they had caught
From the descending dews, which, nightly fraught,
Come down, in beauty, gentleness, and love.

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